

صكنا من الامل

Monday April 8 1996

Table of international flight routes and prices, including destinations like Athens, Amsterdam, and various European cities.

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Sir John Hall, our rich friend in the North King of the Tyne G2 with European weath...

After the Big Breakfast, the big chat show Gaby goes straight G2 pages 8/9

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Tory rage at Blair's Christian attack

John Ezard and Patrick Wintour

TONY BLAIR yesterday provoked furious Tory criticism, and a new battle for the high ground of politics, when he said he believed the Conservatives' narrow view of self-interest conflicted with Christian values.



Blair gospel

'My view of Christian values led me to oppose what I perceived to be a narrow view of self-interest that Conservatism - particularly its modern, more right-wing form - represents' - Tony Blair

... as a reason why people should vote for them... they have abandoned moral thought themselves. The angriest remarks came from David Wilshire, convenor of the Methodist Fellowship at the House of Commons.

The controversy is likely to distress Mr Blair, who in the article repeated his deep distaste for "politicians who wear God on their sleeves".

retorted that Mr Blair and Labour had shown themselves "entirely motivated by self-interest - the self-interest of power".

"They fail to look beyond to the community and the individual's relationship with the community," he wrote. "That is the essential reason why I am on the left rather than the right."

Republicans 'at war'

David Sharrock Ireland Correspondent

KEY figures in the talks that led to the IRA ceasefire told fellow republicans they were once more "in a war situation" as they commemorated the 80th anniversary of the Irish Easter risings yesterday.

ing no hint of another IRA ceasefire. His comments came as the Sinn Fein President, Gerry Adams, accused the Irish prime minister, John Bruton, of caving into London and failing to provide the right leadership.

promote a Unionist agenda and proposals is not encouraging. The Sinn Fein vice-president, Pat Doherty, also told a rally in West Belfast that few nationalists and republicans had any confidence in the Irish premier.

Briton's championship cup floweth over



Damon Hill celebrates victory in the Argentinian Grand Prix in his Williams yesterday. It was his third straight win this season. Report, page 16 PHOTOGRAPH: PASCAL RONDEAU

BBC's Bashir 'smeared by colleagues'

Edward Pilkington

THE BBC accused some of its staff yesterday of participating in a newspaper smear campaign against a Panorama journalist, after Martin Bashir, the reporter who secured the Princess of Wales interview, was alleged to have forged private bank statements in the run up to the broadcast.

pert, Alan Waller, forbidding him from disclosing any information on the earl and his family or on the royal family to the press. The second sheet gave an entry for a payment from Penfold's Consultants, a business partnership mentioned in an earlier Panorama investigation by Mr Bashir into the affairs of the England football coach, Terry Venables.

Switched-on Japanese woman on the geisha game

Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo

JAPANESE men in their hundreds of thousands are escaping into an expanding virtual world even more improbable than that of space invaders - one where girlfriends, incredibly, do as they are told.

obedient servants of men," one young woman, Masako Fujii, explained. In Exciting Memory, for example, the player is offered more than 10 young women with whom to dally. He chooses the one with whom he will develop a relationship. In most ways it is true to life - except crucially, that the lucky lady does not have the option of telling her fantasy-prone boyfriend to get lost.

that women have been the first to be sacked in Japan's recession, the real thing is leaving the country. A female brain-drain is under way as women who want careers that go beyond being the office teatime, head abroad. The US and England are among their western destinations along with international companies based in Hong Kong and Singapore.

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As an aggressive strain of cancer is claiming victims, especially young children, at an alarming rate.

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Advertisement for Bose Wave radio, including contact information and a coupon for a free information pack.

ian... all hits out at Keegan critics

No 20,619

Playing the numbers game at £7 a night

The sense that playing bingo is a sort of job was overpowering. The regulars came in with a business-like determination, took their seats, and began



Matthew Engel

AS CLUBS go, it does not have the cachet of the Groucho or the Groucho. But then the waiting list is shorter, the entrance fee cheaper and it is certainly a handier for Dudley Bus Station.

The Gala Bingo Club, Dudley, is in session every afternoon except Sundays, and every night except Christmas night, in the former Dudley Hippodrome, where Laurel and Hardy once performed.

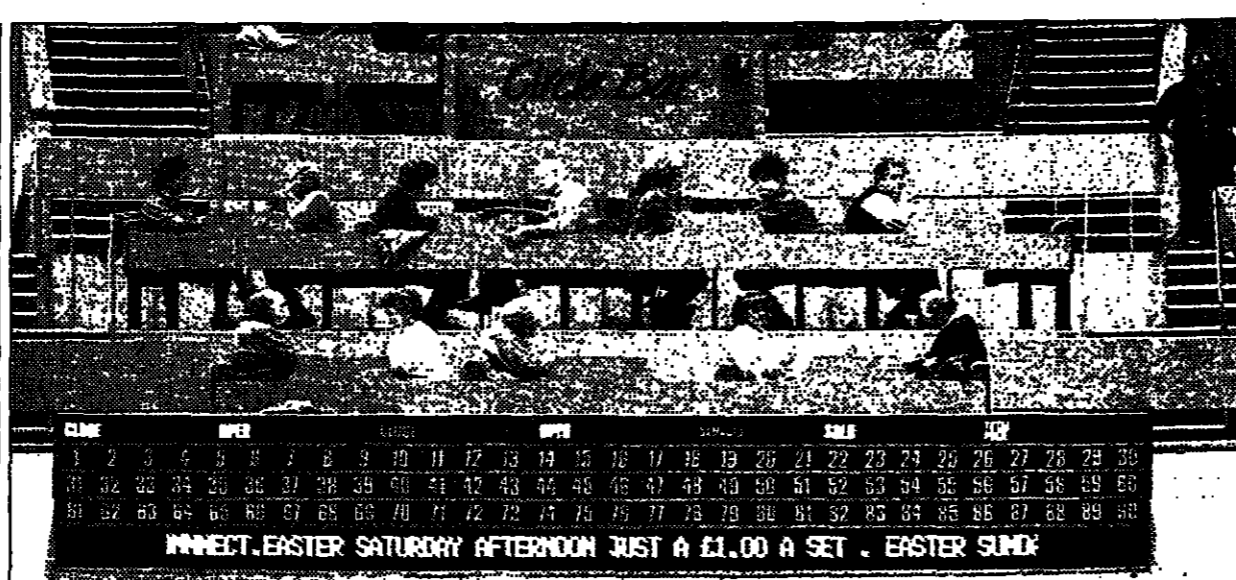
The old theatres and cinemas, where young people might have gone, closed down in the 1950s and the 1960s, that gravely misunderstood decade, to be replaced by bingo halls for their parents. But it is a curiosity of the 1990s that what seemed to be Britain's most indestructible institutions have suddenly started

into the abyss: the monarchy, the Conservative Party, now bingo.

Nationally, half the halls — 900 of them — have gone since the numbers peaked in 1972. Since the National Lottery began, takings are down by a sixth. For obscure reasons, the West Midlands has been hardest-hit. The Top Rank Club, up the hill from the Gala, is about to join the list of closures.

On the other hand, there is a huge new purpose-built Mecca place down the road in Oldbury, which is doing mega-business. That is another problem here at the Hippodrome. But Gala is the biggest operator in the country, with 130 clubs; it is owned by Bass; it is lobbying the Government to ease some of the restrictions of the 1968 Gaming Act, and is working hard to persuade people that bingo is not the preserve of "old ladies in hair nets" (the company's phrase) but belongs to the young, trend-setting and chic. Maybe one day Gala will take over the Groucho Club.

The Dudley club is not obviously struggling. About 350 were in on Friday night and John Madeley, the general manager, was anxious to explain what a pleasant place he had. "In the olden days bingo halls were not very nice places at all. They were not well-decorated. Now it's more like walk-



Full house... Bingo players await the next game at the Gala Bingo Club in Dudley

ing into a nice night club or restaurant. They can have a drink or the dish of the day. It is a place people can come, especially ladies, where they feel safe, where they can come on their own and find friends."

This is all true. And the safety theme was repeated by many of Mr Madeley's customers, especially younger ones. In the night clubs there

are punch-ups: in the pubs you get hassled; here customers and staff are friendly but no one bothers you.

But it is only half the picture. I am not a complete novice in matters of gambling: I can work out my winnings on an each-way double; I know whether or not to take a card playing blackjack. But this was bewildering in its speed

and complexity, requiring extraordinary levels of comprehension and concentration.

I had vaguely wondered, innocently, whether callers now called No 10 "Major's Den" the way they used to refer to "Maggie's Den", or whether there was any new folk-numbering to supplement "clickety-click" and "two fat ladies". Mr Madeley was shocked. "In

our type of hall now bingo is serious. There aren't table tennis balls any more. The numbers come through a computer at a nice, regular pace. People like it done professionally because sometimes it's for quite a bit of money."

Indeed, the numbers were called, without comment or showmanship, by a young man in a yellow bow tie at a

rate of about one a second. Before he can say anything, they flash up on screens. The men tended to be less engaged. But many of the women were marking six grids, which is a considerable task, involving imperceptibly co-ordinated movements of hand and eye.

There was silence. Cigarettes were left burning in the ashtray until someone shouted "House" and there was a break. Even this was momentary because the cards were computer-checked. The hard-core players, like Sheila — a bingo regular for 37 years — play 12 grids simultaneously if a chum has to go to the loo. This is amazing. Air traffic controllers cannot have done their jobs with more intensity this Easter.

The sense that playing bingo is a sort of job was overpowering. The regulars came in with a business-like determination, took their seats, and began. When the evening was over, they left as if the factory hooter had gone. There was camaraderie, but not the constant chit-chat of a normal club — it was the snatched laughter of a busy workplace. Then back to business.

Theoretically, there are intervals between the three main sessions. But there is bingo even then: quickfire games, played at even faster

speed, and in the side-rooms, prize bingo, where you win packets of Buz or tins of baked beans. It is in the intervals that Gala makes its profits.

In the foyer, in keeping with Section 14 (4) (H) of the Gaming Act, there is a chart from which a mathematician, with a bit of neck craning, might be able to compute the odds on each of the games. This was beyond me, but the house's take seems to vary between next to nothing, if it is running loss leaders, and close to the Lottery level of 50 per cent. On average customers spend £7 a night; they do not normally get it all back.

Mr Madeley cannot advertise his prize money and he was concerned that if he even mentioned the nightly £100,000 national jackpot it might contravene the Gaming Act. Since the Lottery screams out its payouts (although not its absurd odds), this is not its absurd odds.

The bingo industry does need help, if only because it nurtures quite exceptional skills in its players. Nowadays they are undervalued, because the computers that have transformed bingo have transformed industry as well, and the need for women that can work this fast and this accurately has diminished. One day the nation might have need of them again.

Tories stand by 'un-American' attack on Blair

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

THE Conservative Party yesterday defended its decision to send a two-page dossier denouncing Tony Blair, the Labour leader, as "un-American" to selected American journalists before Mr Blair's visit this week to Washington and New York.

The propaganda move was greeted as a "pragmatic stunt" by the Labour Party, which predicted that it would backfire on the Tories by giving more publicity to Mr Blair's visit to meet President Bill Clinton and Wall Street bankers, and to visit homeless projects.

The research by Central Office, including claims that both Mr Blair and his wife, Cherie, were anti-nuclear and anti-American, was prepared to counter the tide of generally favourable media coverage for Mr Blair in the US. Americans widely expect him to be the next prime minister. He has already been the subject of a favourable profile in the New Yorker magazine, from which other US journalists are likely to take their cue.

An unrepentant Conservative Central Office, however, insisted yesterday that it was only copying tactics adopted by the Labour Party, which regularly amasses and distributes damaging past quotes by cabinet ministers.

"When we do it, Labour denounce it as dirty tricks. When they do it, Labour says it is fair, sweetness and light and the work of Christians," said a spokeswoman.

She claimed many US opinion-formers knew little of Mr Blair, that all the quotes were accurate. She added that Labour criticism of the dossier were garbage.

She added the dossier was to have been handed this week to British journalists accompanying Mr Blair to New York and Washington.

"The dossier is largely based on guilt by association, and is very light on direct anti-American quotes from Mr Blair. This is possibly because the Labour leader is one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the US Democrats in the British Labour party.

Using the McCarthyite phrase The Un-American activities of Mr Blair as its title, the dossier repeatedly refers to Mr Blair's stated opposition to nuclear weapons in the mid-Eighties — both in his election manifesto in 1983 and indirectly through his

membership of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee pressure group.

It also cites Neil Kinnock, the then Labour leader, in 1986 in the Commons rejecting the US bombing of Libya as an act of rage by President Ronald Reagan.

"Mr Blair registered his support for his leader," the dossier claims, "by voting against the two governments' action in the debate over Libya in April 1986."

Mr Blair is also criticised for being a member of Parliamentary CND, citing a newspaper advert by that group calling for the removal of cruise missiles from Britain and for demonstrations outside the US Embassy in London in 1986.

A Commons motion criticising "the USA's evil campaign against Nicaragua" and "President Reagan's state-sponsored terrorism in Central America" to which Mr Blair put his name in 1988 is the final piece of evidence.

A picture of the anti-American Shadow Cabinet is also conjured up through reference to four Shadow Cabinet members attending the short-lived Supper Club, which opposed British entry into the war against Iraq in the Gulf in 1990.

His promotion of members

Mr Blair has already been the subject of a favourable profile in the New Yorker

of this group — John Prescott, Michael Meacher, Tom Clarke, Margaret Beckwith and Claire Short — shows, according to Central Office, that Mr Blair sympathises with their views.

There is a tradition, now little honoured on either side of the political fence, that politicians travelling abroad are in some way representing Britain, and therefore should not be subject to partisan attacks back home during their overseas visit.

"The reluctance of other countries to accept Professor al-Mas'ari gives backing to the Government's stance on this," said a senior Whitehall official.

Subway vigilante prepares for next showdown



Darrell Cabey... paralysed victim seeking \$50 million

Bernie Goetz, the nerdy New Yorker turned symbol of 'white rage', gives Ian Katz a rare interview

A LOOK of horror spreads across Bernie Goetz's thin face as he recalls the scene he witnessed at a Manhattan shop: the lobsters were alive, but around them everything was dead.

"And I'm sure the lobsters are quite aware that they are sitting in a bunch of meat," he says.

Mr Goetz, now aged 48, exhibits far less distress recalling the incident 11 years ago which transformed him from an anonymous electrical engineer into one of New York's most notorious figures — instantly christened by the tabloids the "subway vigilante".

"I feel very comfortable about what I did," he says. "I'm not ashamed for having shot the guys under those circumstances."

The circumstances, he says, were always maintained, were that four black youths surrounded him, demanding money, as he sat in a subway carriage on December 22, 1984. Mr Goetz, who is white, drew a gun and opened fire, injuring all four.

After a highly controversial trial, he was acquitted in 1987 of attempted murder and later served an eight-month jail term for illegal possession of a firearm. To many Americans, the bespectacled engineer was a hero. To others, he was a trigger-happy racist.

These days, Mr Goetz would prefer to talk about his vegetarian diet and his guinea pig and a chinchilla.

However, other people still want to talk about that day on



Bernie Goetz with his chinchilla. "I feel very comfortable with what I did. I am not ashamed for having shot the guys."

the Number Two train — specifically, lawyers for Darrell Cabey, the youth most seriously injured in the incident. Mr Cabey, who suffered brain damage and partial paralysis, is suing Mr Goetz for \$50 million (£31 million).

Mr Goetz hopes the civil trial which opens in a Bronx court today will be the last of the legal marathon he unwittingly entered when he squeezed the trigger of his .38.

Ronald Kuby, the lawyer representing Mr Cabey, claims that he will show Mr Goetz was a racist, who attempted to shoot the injured Cabey again, telling him: "You don't look too bad, here's another."

Mr Goetz admits he did try to shoot Mr Cabey again, but insists that is academic — because he had run out of bullets. He says he had nothing to do with it: "The guys were shot because of what they were doing, not because of the colour of their skin."

He is a lawyer, Darnay Hoffman, claims Mr Goetz is a victim of "liberal McCarthyism", and ridicules Mr Cabey's claim. "He wants to

be given more money for trying to rob someone and falling than Michael Jackson will make this year."

At the time of the shootings, the gawky, nerdy Mr Goetz became an improbable poster boy for a growing "white rage" backlash against the apparent failure of government to curb crime.

Surrounding to police in New Hampshire after six days on the run, Mr Goetz told detectives: "The subway system... is a disaster. The school system is a disaster... the crime system is a disaster... the truth is ugly, it's disgusting and I was a monster. But I wasn't a monster until several years ago in New York."

Mr Goetz says he received more support than criticism for his actions. "People generally look at it as 'bad guy, good guy'. Basically, people like to see bad guys get shot."

Mr Goetz now doesn't get out often, but spends most of his time in his Manhattan apartment watching television and reading, particularly on his favourite subject, the Roman Empire. He earns a living repairing electrical equipment.

During a rare interview this weekend, large photographs of the youths shot by Mr Goetz lay on a coffee table. He says the photos do not cause him any distress.

He claims the youths — all of whom had some form of criminal record, and one of whom is now serving a prison sentence for rape — "represent the failure of the social system... if you have irresponsible people having babies, there can be no good solution."

Alternately diffident and defiant, Mr Goetz cuts a somewhat unsettling figure. What, precisely, does he mean when he says countries should be "more selective in their immigrants, just like people should buying an animal?"

"They should be 'the type of people you wouldn't mind seeing Christmas dinner with'," he explains, avoiding any mention of race.

Bernie Goetz says he cannot understand why he is still dealing with the consequences of 1984. "In the old West, if someone had shot four outlaws, why would they bother to try and catch him?"

Britain fails to find country to take in Saudi dissident

COUNTRIES as far afield as Sweden and New Zealand have refused to take the Saudi dissident, Professor Mohammed al-Mas'ari. It was disclosed yesterday.

According to Whitehall sources, fruitless attempts were made at the opening of the Inter-Governmental Conference in Turin on March 29 to persuade individual European Union members to take

Professor al-Mas'ari. Further discussions with neutral countries, such as Switzerland, and Commonwealth nations like New Zealand, have proved equally unsuccessful.

"The reluctance of other countries to accept Professor al-Mas'ari gives backing to the Government's stance on this," said a senior Whitehall official.

Getting to the heart of the matter

Review

Tom Sutcliffe

HERE is little difference between a concert and an act of worship — on Good Friday. The crucial part of the Good Friday liturgy is the Passion story according to St John. St Basil does the oration of the Cross in music, with his meditative arias for tenor, bass, alto and soprano interlarded with narrative, choruses and hymns (or chorales).

No doubt the Festival Hall audience on Friday at 8pm included the usual cross-section of humanists, atheists and Jews. But we were all as rapt and involved as the most devout bunch of Christians.

Mark Padmore is one of the most remarkable evangelists singing today. What renders his performance so impressive is its lack of sentimentality. He makes every word tell, but with a serene, stone-bewn objectivity that never becomes self-indulgent. An extra bonus is his slight roughness: high-shine polish is never right here, just sincerity and devotion to the inner truths about suffering and clarity.

Ronald Corp, conducting

with a taste and energy that ideally matched Padmore, wonderfully supported and enthused the London Choral Society. One might have criticised the sopranos' boisterous top A's in the opening chorus. By and large the wholesome ensemble and sweet natural timbre of this 130-strong choir provided a marvellous human backdrop to the drama.

If the New London Orchestra was dwarfed by the chorists at full peit, it suited the soloists perfectly — which was important. Corp got a decent, not laboured sense of baroque style: William Hunt's viola da gamba in the second alto aria was superb, a great partner to James Bowman's ravishingly sung "It is fulfilled". Tenor

Paul Agnew rose to the incredible demands of "Behold him, see". Baritone Stephen Varcoe was at his best in the thrilling bass aria with chorus, "My Lord and Saviour". Stephen Holloway, standing in as Christus for a sick Paul Robinson, made a firm if youthful impression.

What stuck in the mind, though, was the beauty of Padmore's extended melismas on the description of how Peter "wept bitterly" after the cock crowed at the disciple's third denial that he had known Jesus. Peter's too human failure is one of the most sublime moments in Christian art. In those few bars, Padmore seemed to get to the heart of what it is all about.

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'Smears' led to ousting at Woolwich

Gary Younge

THE ousted chief of the Woolwich Building Society yesterday accused senior managers within the company of conducting an "orchestrated smear campaign" to remove him because of the speed at which he was trying to reform the company.

Peter Robinson, who resigned as chief executive of the Woolwich on Tuesday after an internal audit revealed alleged "discrepancies" in his company expenses, said: "I deplore what I believe is an orchestrated smear campaign against me. I'm getting lots of feedback about what is going on — that staff have been invited to offer up any negative information about me and they are guaranteed that their jobs are not at risk."

"I can pinpoint that this is coming from a caucus of dissidents that I unsettled as I got everyone up to speed for the conversion. There are those who don't embrace change."

Mr Robinson, aged 54, who had been with the society for 33 years, said the resistance came from the managerial rather than board level, but refused to name names.

"You don't work within an organisation without upsetting a few and hopefully pleasing the many. Pleasing the many must have been what happened as I was appointed chief executive three months ago. I have not changed in three months."

The Woolwich yesterday denied there had been a smear campaign but admitted employees had been asked to provide information about Mr Robinson.

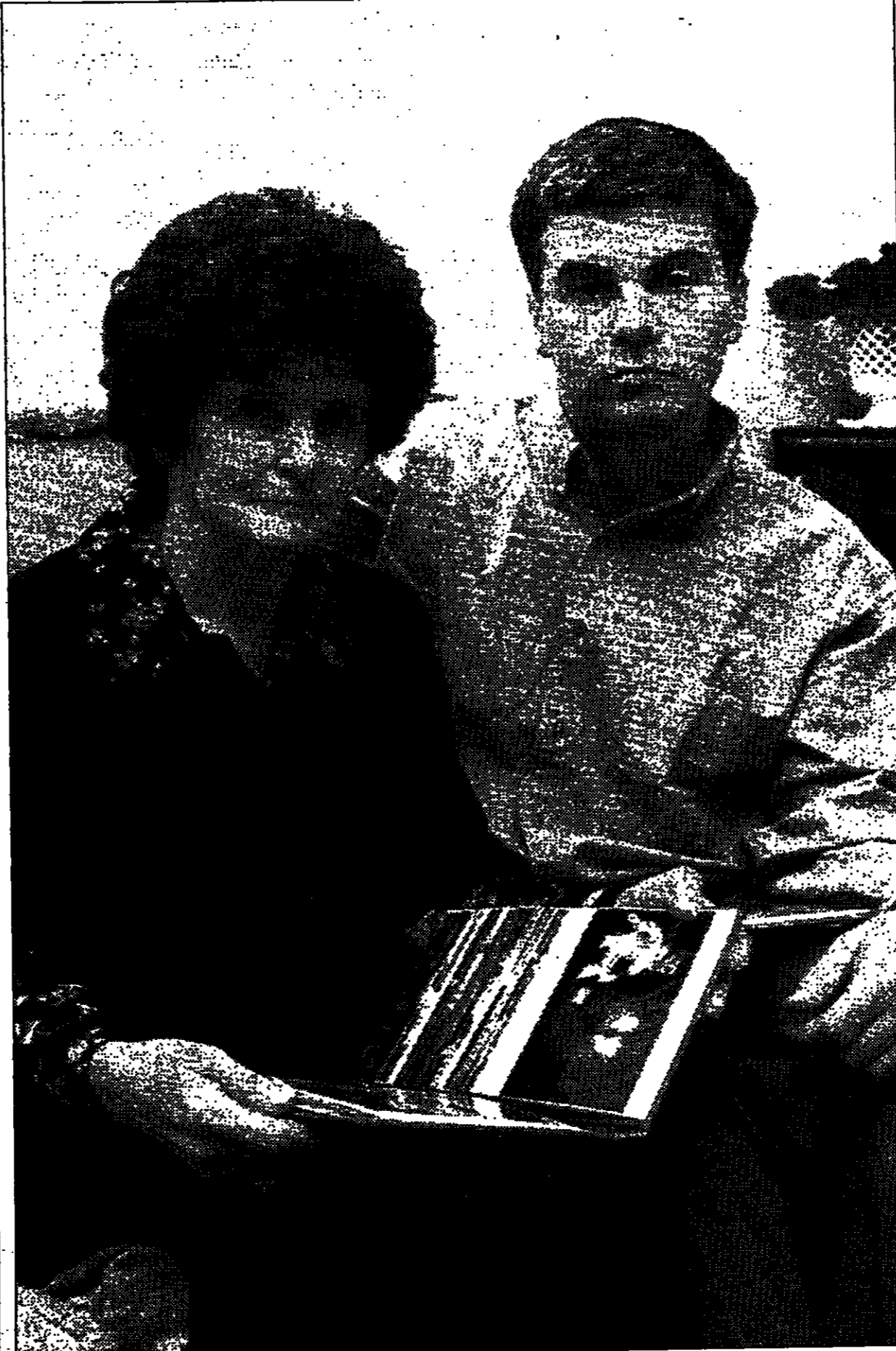
"We are conducting a thorough investigation and we would ask members of staff if they do have information but this bit about guaranteeing jobs, I don't think that has been mentioned," said David Black, head of corporate affairs. The allegations had been the result of "journalist investigations" and "not any statements by the Woolwich," said Mr Black.

Mr Robinson resigned from his £300,000 job after an internal audit committee alleged that he had charged improvements on his £450,000 home in Kent, gardening bills and the purchase of a Range Rover to the society without authorisation. Previously Mr Robinson, who has denied all claims through his lawyers, had denounced people who attempt to make quick profits by investing in societies in the hope of windfall profits after a flotation as "carpet baggers."

Woolwich has stated that it will not refer Mr Robinson to the police so long as he agrees to pay back the disputed expenses. Negotiations between the lawyers representing both the firm and Mr Robinson continue.

Yesterday, both he and his wife were both "shocked and saddened" by the events of the last five days. "The initial reaction of horror has turned to one of anger and determination to put these things right," he said.

But they had been cheered to get support. "One of the comforts in this fairly black period was that when we got home waiting on the doormat were letters of support from people within the organisation, from staff, from friends and from business connections. It was very heartwarming to see that I have had lots of responses — there must have been upwards of 40 or 50 letters."



Dragica and Milan Popovich, the widow and son of Stevan Popovich, (top left), at home in Oldham yesterday, and (above left) Mrs Popovich with her late husband

Family in plea after mugged pensioner dies

Martin Wainwright

THE family of a pensioner who died after being dragged from his car and mugged for £50 appealed for help in the hunt for his attacker yesterday, as detectives puzzled over the Yugoslav war veteran's last moments.

Police are trying to establish why Stevan Popovich, aged 74, who was viciously kicked and punched by a teenager in Chapeltown, Leeds, took a wrong turning on his way to pick up a Serbian friend in an area he frequently visited and knew well.

The retired bus driver died of a heart attack after struggling with the youth, described as an Afro-Caribbean with a "pineapple" haircut, early on Saturday. Although in poor health, he tried to stop his attacker making off with his brown Rover car, and was dragged for some 15 yards while wrestling with the man through the window.

Mr Popovich's widow Dragica, aged 65, said yesterday at the couple's home in Shaw, a suburb of Oldham: "Whoever killed my husband must be caught before he kills again. He loved the people here and he just trusted people. He has never been nasty to anyone."

The victim's son Milan, aged 42, an optical systems designer, said: "My father wouldn't hurt a fly. He had no enemies."

Mr Popovich, whose sister was killed towards the end of the Bosnian war, appears to have missed a turning and found himself in an inner-city area whose reputation for violence rests more on opportunistic attacks than any general air of menace. He drove into a narrow side street, Back Newton Grove, at a quiet time, 8.15am, where the teenager — who also ripped off his coat, wristwatch and wedding ring — was hanging about.

"Mr Popovich was sadly in the wrong place at the wrong time," said Det Supt Andy Brown, whose inquiry team began house-to-house inquiries in Chapeltown yesterday. "We need to catch the killer quickly. It was a cowardly, savage attack on a very old man. Mr Popovich was probably too old for what he tried to do, but he has got to be admired for his brave actions to stop the thief."

The attack was seen by a taxi driver from a local minicab firm, Quikline, and by residents who ran out as Mr Popovich pressed his horn and shouted for help.

The attacker was described as light-skinned, stocky and wearing a dark leather jacket with a green shirt hanging loose. A youth of similar description was seen nearby with a teenager wearing a

Yankees blue baseball cap, but detectives have not found evidence of an accomplice.

Tamrez Khan, aged 38, head of Quikline, said violence was frequent in Chapeltown and obvious targets took precautions — including local pensioners who used cabs to travel the short distance, sometimes as little as 40 yards, to Back Newton post office. Postmaster Rangodh Singh Thind said: "Everybody is sickened, although it came as no surprise. There are meetings and hearings in Chapeltown on a daily basis."

Milan Popovich said: "We have a lot of friends in Leeds because there is a large Serbian community in Chapeltown. It was an area he felt

familiar with and maybe he must have thought that he would be safe."

Mr Popovich was widely known in Britain's Serb community. He was a vice-president of the Serbian Chetnik Association, and was visiting Chapeltown to take a colleague to a meeting in Leicester to discuss aid for Serbian victims of the Bosnian war.

"He was a proud man, who arrived in Britain with just a pound in his pocket but built up a good life," said Fr Zarko Medic, whose Serbian Orthodox church in Bradford was regularly attended by Mr Popovich's family. Prayers were said for the dead man yesterday at Serbian churches across the country.

Key republican dampens hopes of IRA ceasefire with talk of war

continued from page 1

had not squandered the year and a half of IRA cessation for selfish party political reasons, we might have been well on the way to the resolution of the age-old conflict between Britain and Ireland."

He accepted there was confusion in republican ranks about what the next steps should be, a remark that indicates the debate over whether to return to a full-scale campaign of violence or to take the political route is still continuing.

Mr Kelly rarely speaks in public and became known during the Stormont talks as "the silent one". His audience yesterday was not full of the usual Sinn Fein faces, and an IRA representative was shielded from view by comrades as he read out the organisation's annual Easter message.

Mr Kelly was introduced as "one of that intrepid band who took the war to England". He was convicted of being among the first Provisional IRA bombers to target London in the early 1970s. After many years in prison, escape and recapture in Holland, extradition and completion of his sentence, he was "released and took up the battle where he left off", the crowd was told.

Mr Kelly told the crowd the ceasefire had lasted "an incredible 18 months". For it to work again, there had to be unambiguous assurances that all-party talks would begin without any preconditions. Sinn Fein also wanted "time frames to achieve progress," suggesting that the party is pushing the British and Irish governments to set target deadlines for an outcome.

Despite the situation, Mr Kelly echoed Mr Adams by saying that "not all is doom and gloom". There were encouraging signs from grassroots Unionists, and the national question was once more to the forefront of Irish politics. Republicans had emerged from the long imposed isolation.

"I know that there is some confusion out there because of the fluidity of the situation," he said. Turning to the forthcoming elections in Northern Ireland, Mr Kelly said he was against them but "if we need to defend the rights of our electorate we will do so. But there is no going back to any Stormont assembly."

Chernobyl cancer cases soar among young

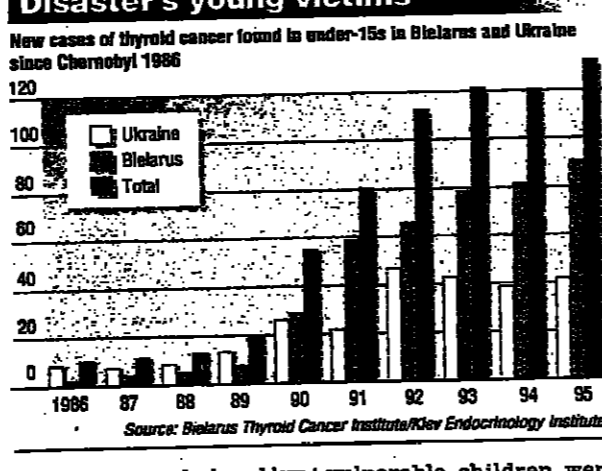
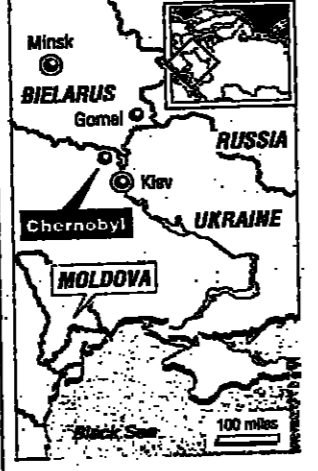
James Meek in Kiev

AN AGGRESSIVE strain of Chernobyl-induced thyroid cancer which has already left more than 1,000 young people scars and on medication for the rest of their lives is claiming victims at a growing rate, and will not abate until well into the next century, doctors believe.

The latest figures from Belarus, Ukraine and Russia, to be presented today in Vienna, show a continuing increase in the number of thyroid cancer cases — particularly among children, and mainly from areas adjacent to the nuclear power station.

"If we see an increase now, it's only the beginning," said Alexander Poveretny, a Russian biochemist. "The peak will be in 20 to 25 years' time."

Valery Tereshchenko, of the Kiev endocrinology institute, where most of the young Ukrainian victims are operated on, said: "No one predicted thyroid cancer on



have to take the hormone thyroxin every day for life.

A small number of children have died because their condition was not diagnosed in time. Sadly, most cases could have been easily prevented with common iodine pills, if only the authorities had warned people in time.

"Of course the best thing would have been to have taken iodine in the first hours after the accident," said Mr Tereshchenko. "For it to have been effective, it would have had to be enough to have daubed it on the skin or to have gargled with it."

Analysis of cases shows they are concentrated in the two regions most badly contaminated by the disaster — Gomel in Belarus and the Kiev region in Ukraine.

A scientific consensus has emerged that the thyroid disaster is directly attributable to Chernobyl. Some scientists say an increase in other cancers still lies ahead.

Chernobyl Diary, page 9

One of the young men strokes his fishnet stockings, eases them down his thighs, and muses: "What's so special about the Rocky Horror Show? Well, it's got everything that's 'bad' or inhibited — cannibalism, incest, homosexuality, cross-dressing, domination, everything."

Simon Hattenstone on Rocky Horror

NEW! CLINICALLY PROVEN

Bazuka that verruca

New Bazuka Gel is a unique, clinically proven treatment that is now available from your pharmacist without the need for anaesthetic.

Bazuka not only works to eliminate warts and verrucas, but also dries to form a unique water-resistant protective barrier designed to help inhibit the spread of the wart/verruca infection, without the need for plasters.

Bazuka is quick and easy to use — a complete treatment kit for verrucas, warts, corns and calluses.

FORMS A WATER-RESISTANT BARRIER — NO NEED FOR PLASTERS

Decline in marxist ideas allows return to ethics-based interpretations of socialism but party remains wary

Christian revival in Labour of love

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

CHRIStIAN socialism, a feature of Labour thinking since the party's birth, has been undergoing a revival over the past five years. The resurgence has been helped by the decline of marxist economic determinism, and the return to more ethics-based interpretations of socialism inside the party.

kind of respectability it had previously lacked. Others in the upper echelons of the party who have connected their religious beliefs to socialism are Chris Smith, the social security spokesman, Paul Boateng, the legal affairs spokesman, Hilary Armstrong, the local government spokeswoman, John Battle, the energy spokesman, and Norman Hogg, a friend of John Smith and an Elder of the Church of Scotland.

On what David Sheppard, the former Archbishop of Liverpool, described as God's bias towards the poor. In a recent book published by the Christian Socialist Movement, its chairman, Chris Bryant, pointed to the ugliness of George Bush's claims in the 1992 presidential election that God was not just an American, but a Republican.

Mr Bryant went on: "In Britain the Conservative Party has regularly attempted to portray itself as the party of the family, embracing traditional values, with its leaders very publicly attending Church." It would be wrong for Christian socialists to present themselves in the same way,

achievable through society. "Conservatism, by contrast, was based on the flaw that human beings conduct their lives on the basis of self-interested decisions taken in radical isolation from others." Despite his belief in the socialist analysis of society, Mr Smith was careful to say: "Christian socialists should never seek to suggest Christians must be socialists."

Self is best realised through communion with others. He also claimed equality, in the sense of entitlement to equal treatment, was central to Christianity. However, Mr Blair has always been very careful not to discuss his Christianity unless asked, or to force it upon anyone else. He has never appealed to the Bible to prove some party point. Nor does he see Christianity and Conservatism as incompatible.

Conservatives co-opt work ethic as mixed Church views add further fuel to unholy row



'Every single thing the Labour Party has done over the last three years has been undoubtedly self-interest in the pursuit of power. He portrays Pontius Pilate as a man torn between right and expediency. The Labour Party has consistently chosen expediency'

Ann Widdecombe
Catholic convert
Home Office Minister



'The work ethic is born from Christian belief and it is one of the fundamentals of Conservatism that everyone should have the opportunity to work to their maximum reward while providing a safety net below which those weaker than ourselves should not fall'

Michael Fabricant
Conservative backbencher



'No politician should embark on trying to argue Christianity as justification for their ideology. He starts off by saying that he is not suggesting you can't be a Christian and a Conservative, but then he goes on and implies it'

David Wilshire
Conservative backbencher
Commons Methodist
Fellowship convenor



'The Tory MPs who are having a go at Blair today may be feeling guilty about the way they have handled the Scott report and the BSE crisis. With them, it seems morality comes second'

George Austin
Archdeacon of York



'He has not said anything'

Spokesman for the
Roman Catholic primate
Cardinal Basil Hume



'He is not prepared to be interrupted on a Catholic Feast Day'

Office of
Environment Secretary
John Selwyn Gummer
a former Synod member
but now a Catholic

News in brief

Murder hunt as twins found dead in canal

POLICE have launched a murder inquiry after the bodies of identical twin brothers were found floating in the same canal eight days apart. The body of Christopher Langford, aged 38, was found in the Regent's Canal in Islington, north London, on March 25. A post mortem examination revealed various injuries but was unable to establish the cause of his death, which is being treated as suspicious. The body of Anthony Langford was found last Wednesday, 30 yards from where his brother's body was discovered.

Lib Dems complain to BBC

THE Liberal Democrats have lodged a formal complaint with the BBC and ITV over the convention that final election party election broadcasts should alternate between the Government and Labour. In the run-up to next month's local elections, the Lib Dems said the convention could no longer be justified because, in local government, they had eclipsed the Tories to become the second largest party "both in terms of seats and councils controlled".

Hospital's plea on Internet

A HOSPITAL, which has 40 patients in its area awaiting transplants has gone on the Internet with a plea to people to register to save a life. By using an e-mail address, would-be donors will receive an NHS registration form and donor card. Wythenshawe hospital, in Greater Manchester, is also using the World Wide Web to appeal for donations to its "New heart - new start" appeal. The hospital, one of the four main transplant centres, has performed 324 heart and lung transplants in the past nine years. Web users are told that by becoming a donor they join a nationwide list of people who will help others to live after their deaths.

Former spy base for sale

A FORMER top-secret United States spy base which kept track of Russian submarines has been put up for sale. Banks and financial institutions needing high-security computer facilities could be among those interested in the seven-acre site at Brawdy, in Pembrokeshire. The US navy left the base last year following the end of the cold war. It operated for more than 20 years and was once home to 450 American personnel and 70 civilian staff. Surrounded by security fencing and watch towers, Brawdy was officially described as a naval facility for ocean research. But special cables running out to sea from the coastline monitored the movements of Soviet submarines in the Irish Sea and far out into the Atlantic.

Court plea over 'baton death'

THE family of music promoter Brian Douglas, 33, who died in police custody after being arrested in Clapham, south London, last May, are to seek judicial review of a Crown Prosecution Service decision last week not to prosecute officers. The family claim he suffered a fractured skull after being beaten with US-style police batons, and his brother Donald said yesterday: "We hope to bring this matter to the high court within the next 10 days because we think this was a pernicious and unfair decision. If that fails then we will set a private prosecution in motion and consider a civil action for compensation." - Vivek Chaudhary

Clough 'stable' in hospital

FORMER soccer manager Brian Clough (right) was in a stable condition yesterday after hospital treatment for a chest infection. Mr Clough, aged 61, who managed Nottingham Forest until his retirement two years ago, was admitted to the Nuffield hospital, Derby, on Friday. A hospital spokeswoman confirmed that the former England centre-forward was a patient. "He is in a stable condition. We are treating him for a chest infection," she said. "We are also investigating an old knee injury." Mr Clough, who lives in Derbyshire, denied reports that his treatment was due to heavy drinking and said he expected to be out of hospital within two or three days.



Human experiment idea defended by professor



David Morton... questioned status of PVS patients

Vivek Chaudhary
A PROFESSOR in bio-ethics yesterday defended his controversial suggestion that people in a permanent vegetative state could be used for medical experiments instead of animals. David Morton, professor of bio-ethics and veterinary science at Birmingham university, told a seminar at the Edinburgh International Science Festival on Saturday that most scientists wanted a reduction in the millions of animals used in experiments. Alternatives such as the use of cell tissue and computer modelling could not

give an accurate insight into the reaction of an entire animal, he claimed. "Twenty years ago society would not have taken seriously the idea of a person in a permanent vegetative state being used for experiments. But many people already leave their bodies to medical research and these people would give much more accurate information in experiments than chimpanzees." Mr Morton, who has been criticised by religious leaders and relatives of those who are in a permanent vegetative state, claimed yesterday that he was not calling for tests on PVS patients to become routine. His comments also come

at a time when a number of patients have made recoveries. Mr Morton said there was a debate as to whether PVS patients were actually people any more. Research on their bodies could take place when food and water had been withdrawn and before relatives took the decision to terminate the life of a PVS patient. He added: "The medical profession may soon be faced with people who've left their bodies' tissue and organs to research. So if something tragic happens to these people and it's decided that they're so permanently damaged that it's irreversible and doctors have decided to withdraw food and water from them, these

people will have made a living will to say 'we wish our tissue to be used for research as well as organ donation'." In that kind of situation the medical team will have to decide what to do. I'm not advocating anything, I'm reflecting what will come about as a real practical situation - and that may come about in the next few years." On BBC Radio West Midlands, Mr Morton added: "So before you pull the plug, rather than burn the tissue and cremate them, tissue and blood could be taken... but all that depends on what sort of work is going on - you would want to work on tissue that's as healthy as possible."

Mr Morton joined Birmingham university six years ago. His appointment to oversee the use of all animals in experiments was a world first. John Barton, Archdeacon of Aston, and chairman of the church's board of social responsibility, claimed Mr Morton's suggestion could be the "thin end of the wedge". He added: "I think the idea is abhorrent. It all comes down to the worth you are prepared to place on human life." Ann Rogers, whose son is in a permanent vegetative state following a car accident, said: "The suggestion is absolutely appalling. It has shades of Nazi Germany."

Straw promises to scrap Sinn Fein exclusion orders

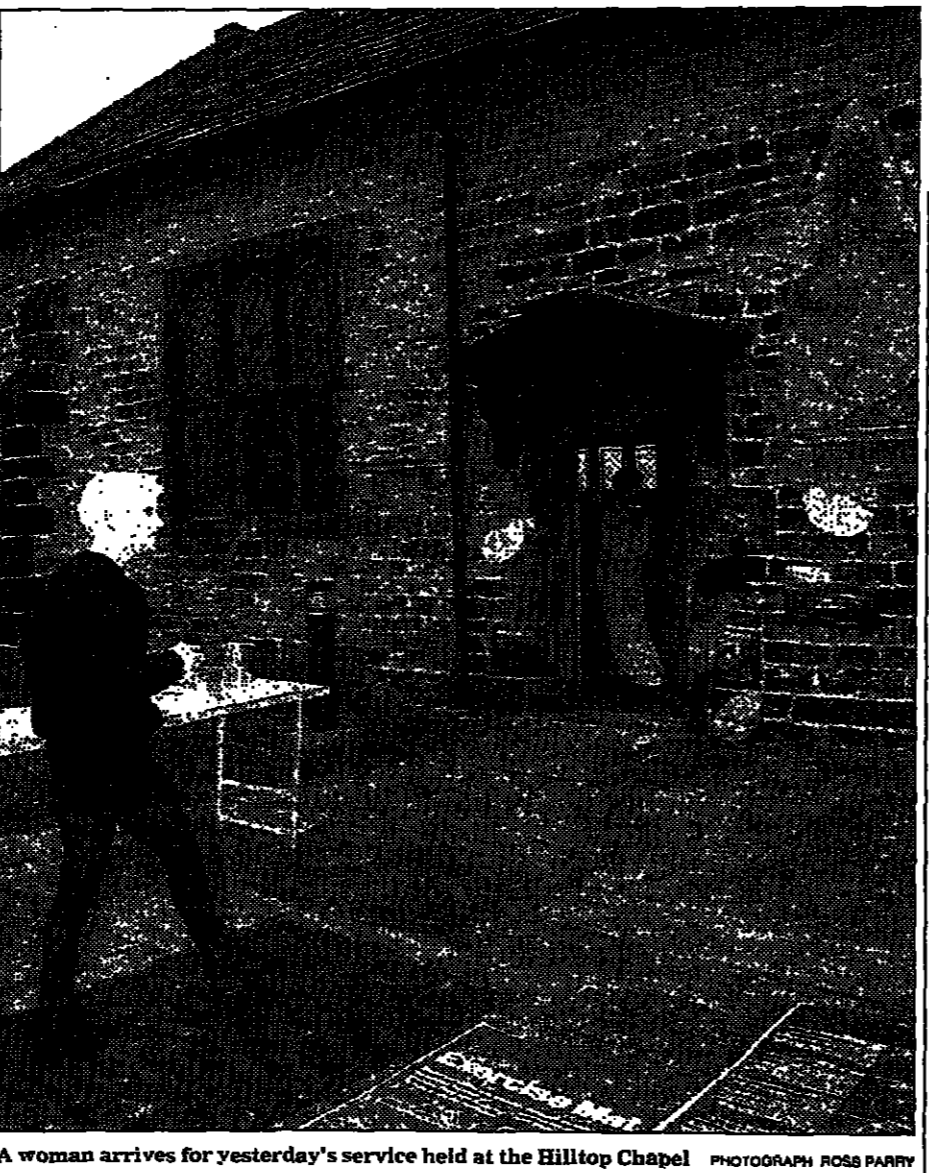
Patrick Wintour
SENIOR Labour figures promised yesterday not to back down on long-standing opposition to exclusion orders which bar Sinn Fein sympathisers from the mainland. The move was an attempt to ally backbenchers to the Government and then reported by an incoming Labour leadership was prepared to accept the Government's anti-terrorist measures in full. The chief whip, Donald Dewar, said: "We have expressed very strong reservations about the legality and justice of this procedure and these objections have been upheld in the courts."

The Government had set up an inquiry into these orders under Lord Lloyd and Mr Dewar hoped that the Government would follow any recommendation he made to lift them. Jack Straw, the shadow home secretary, earlier pledged that regulations on internal exile would be suspended and then replaced by an incoming Labour government. He told the Observer: "Exclusion orders are a stage too far. "Either we are the United Kingdom or we are not. My objection is not on grounds of their utility, but that they are wrong."

Dunblane killer's rifle club to close as mark of respect

Peter Hetherington
THE RIFLE club that provided the Dunblane mass-murderer, Thomas Hamilton, with target practice could close down as a mark of respect for his 17 victims. Stirling Rifle Club is considering winding itself up before Judge Lord Cullen begins an inquiry into the deaths of 16 children and their teacher almost four weeks ago. The club's secretary, Gordon Crawford, said yesterday that the 63 members shared a "collective guilt by association" and wanted the name of the club, Hamilton, aged 43, practised regularly with the club

at the Whitestone military range. He last shot there two weeks before he turned his guns on the reception class in the gym of Dunblane primary school. This week the gym will be demolished by Stirling council. Mr Crawford, an international marksman, said it would be up to members of the Stirling club to decide whether they wanted to carry on as amateur marksmen in an individual capacity. Two months ago members of Callander Rifle and Pistol Club, near Dunblane, refused to ratify Hamilton's membership. Its secretary, Raymond Reid, said: "He was just one of those people that you get a gut feeling about."



A woman arrives for yesterday's service held at the Hilltop Chapel PHOTOGRAPH ROSS PARRY

Wild music and lasers dropped as service is resurrected

Martha Wainwright and David Ward
THE Church of England's 'Nine O'Clock Service', which collapsed in Sheffield last year amid sexual scandal, returned yesterday. Coloured Easter eggs marked the careful re-entry to the Anglican mainstream for 25 adults and 15 children who met at the 17th century Hilltop Chapel, a world away from the shattered "rave parish" former venue in a sports centre. The Venerable Stephen Lowe, Archdeacon of Sheffield, took the congregation through "body prayers" and a service which kept the old spirit of experimentation modestly alive. But there was none of the wild music or laser lighting favoured by Christopher Brann, aged 38, the parish's founder, who has resigned as a priest after admitting sexual involvement with scores of women in his flock. "I think we have brought back the best of NOS, its spirituality and theology," Mr Lowe said. He ended the service with a passage from Nelson Mandela about the many hills able to be climbed. "We intend to appoint a chaplain to NOS within three weeks and it is our intention that this small but committed community is together again."

River search for missing girl

DIVERS were last night searching a stretch of the River Darent, in Kent, near the home of a 15-year-old Nigerian girl, Deo Adebayo, who disappeared last week. A police spokesman said: "Given the location of the river in this was a pernicious and unfair decision. If that fails then we will set a private prosecution in motion and consider a civil action for compensation." - Vivek Chaudhary

Change to elderly care costs

ELDERLY people may suffer unnecessary hardship because of confusion over the rules on funding long-term care, Age Concern warned yesterday. The charity believes many pensioners may raid their savings unaware of changes to capital limits. From today, people can keep £10,000 worth of savings or assets before they have to contribute to care costs. Those with savings between £10,000 and £16,000 pay a contribution. Up until now most people with savings or assets over £8,000 have had to pay for all their care home fees. Those with between £3,000 and £8,000 have had to pay a proportion. Only those with savings under £3,000 have paid nothing.

Princess's mother charged

THE Princess of Wales's mother has been charged with refusing to provide a breath sample after being stopped by police. Frances Shand Kydd, aged 60, was in Oban on Friday when the alleged offence took place. A spokeswoman for Strathclyde police said yesterday that a report had been sent to the procurator fiscal at Oban.

Five share £21m lottery win

FIVE ticket holders shared Saturday's National Lottery rollover jackpot of £21.2 million over the Easter weekend, winning £4.2 million each. The numbers were 1, 4, 6, 14, 17, 38, with bonus ball 9.

Blunket pledges £3bn for schools

Enterainments

Cybersex: empire of the senseless

Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo finds new technology is taking Japan's gender relations forward to the past as obliging virtual girlfriends perk up floppy disk sales and boys who never grew up can father their very own little princess



"PLEASE come back home and see my girl," offered Yoshihiro Saito. "She's very cute, and has really fallen in love with me," he boasted.

The shy, straitlaced trading company executive, aged 32, had always appeared to be a star at work but unsuccessful in love.

His rabbit hutch flat seemed the usual bachelor clutter of books, papers, discarded clothes and dirty dishes. But Yoshihiro was beaming happily as he went to his desk and turned on his computer. In a few minutes the screen warmed up and a smiling, full-colour picture of a pretty woman showed up. She was Yoshihiro's virtual girlfriend, whom he had called "Princess Fuyuko".

"We have a great time together," he chattered happily, pointing out that he talked and made decisions and Fuyuko reacted accordingly, going out on a date, eating, drinking, cuddling — even virtual sex was possible, but Yoshihiro had so far drawn the line at this. "Well, look at this place. I wouldn't really want to bring a nice girl like my princess back here, and I find love hotels rather cheap."

Yoshihiro is by no means alone in preferring virtual friendships and sexual encounters to the real thing. Exciting Memory, one popular computer video game offering friendship and love affairs, including nudity, has been snapped up by more than 600,000 Japanese men in the 16 to 35 age range. A number of games have sold more than half a million copies.

In Exciting Memory, the player has more than 10

young women with whom to play. He chooses the one with whom he will develop a relationship. In most ways it is true to life, except in one crucial aspect — she does not have the option of telling her virtual boyfriend to get lost.

In Graduation II, the player assumes the role of a teacher who chooses what five girls in his class will study, tells them what they should do at the weekends and generally shapes their lives as they are about to leave school. There is interaction in this game in that, if the teacher pays special attention to one girl, the others will react by playing up, becoming cheeky and even dropping out of school.

Yoshihiro seems quite happy with his virtual girlfriend and believes that by playing the game he is learning the techniques which may help him win friendship and even love with a real woman one day.

Not everyone is so sure. A friend, Akira, found his virtual woman became more fascinating than his actual girlfriend, and he spent so much time on his computer that she became jealous. One day she went into his flat and did a bit of tinkering to turn the virtual woman into a witch in an attempt to cure Akira. She did — in that he was heartbroken and refused to speak to the real woman again.

Men are quick to say that the games are harmless and may even help men less shy. "There are no losers, and there is fantasy love which doesn't harm anyone," said Yoshihiro.

But the few women who have seen such games — and few have, according to industry polls — have a different perspective. "The way the virtual woman behave is rather old-fashioned, the way that my mother's generation was



The real thing... Japanese women may be under threat from the booming market in computer girlfriends. PHOTOGRAPH DENIS THORPE

expected to behave — obedient servants of men," Masako Fujii, a woman colleague of Yoshihiro's, said.

"We women are still struggling in this office against the role of perpetual tea-makers, that's still how modern men prefer us."

The head of one company producing the so-called "developmental" games also conceded that men who had enjoyed virtual success playing the games might not find it so easy in real life.

Some sociologists have gone further and complained that the games are built round the ideal of male control and are bad because they help perpetuate old myths.

Which may be why Ms Fujii is unmarried at 29, well past the traditional mid-twenties when women were expected to be married.

"Yes, my mother kept reminding me that at 25 I would be stale Christmas cake and past my sell-by date," she said.

"My younger sister got married at 22 last year, but she had just graduated and prospects of work were dim in the recession. My class were career girls and certainly not prepared to be bossed around by men."

"Saito-san should stop playing with his fantasies and see that Fuyuko is damaging his real life."

'Risqué' game creates Daddy's girls to taste

SHE'S your little princess. You name her, wring your hands when she's sick, fret over her schooling. Like any caring father, you keep steady watch over her hobbies, clothes and manners.

But if, after all your attention, she becomes a bar hostess strutting around in fishnet stockings, or a club-swinging street tough — no problem. Just reboot your computer and start again.

The game is part of a hit series of Japanese software called Princess Maker, which gives the player control over

clothing of a girl character he "raises" from childhood. Even at 14,800 yen (290) per release, the series has sold a combined 200,000 copies, according to its creator, making it a bestseller by the standards of Japan's home computer market.

Its creator, Takami Akai, hopes to finish an English-language version of the game this year, for export to the United States.

But the game might raise some eyebrows in the West. The girl character is depicted in sexy, wide-eyed comic-book style, and can be pro-

grammed to dress in lingerie or sunbathe naked.

"I find it very disconcerting," said Etsuko Yamashita, a women's studies professor at Japan Women's University in Tokyo. "It's like incest."

Still, by the standards of Japanese late-night television or adult comics, Princess Maker is tame. There are no sexual encounters.

Mr Akai believes the game's appeal lies not in titillation, but in giving Japanese males a chance to fantasise about conquering the one place where they don't call the shots — the home. — AP.

Women flee glass ceiling

Evelyn Duffell

SOMETIMES when she visits home, Reiko wants to blurt out: "You're wasting your lives." Instead, she listens to her Japanese friends discussing their favourite restaurant and their dead-end "office lady" jobs.

Reiko is one of an increasing number of young Japanese women who choose to work in the United States or in other Asian countries, to avoid bleak employment prospects at home.

She hopes one day to return to Japan, but to a "career" job, rather than the secretary-stenographer-coffee-server position held by many of Japan's 27 million female workers.

Women are often the first to be fired by recession-hit companies, said Masahiko Eata, aged 35, a Japanese accountant in Los Angeles. "When the economy got really bad, firms didn't feel they had the luxury to be politically correct."

Japanese women still encounter a thick glass ceiling in business and politics, accounting for 7.9 per cent of Japan's administrative and managerial workers, compared with 40 per cent in the US.

The result has been an exodus of talented, career-minded women.

Many Japanese initially come to the US to study. Others leave out of frustration at a corporate culture which has traditionally stifled individuality and creativity.

Many will never return to Japan — because of the opportunities overseas, a chance that they will meet and marry Americans, and the difficulties they would face as Japanese who had stepped off the traditional career path.

Reiko is appalled by what she hears about the Japanese job market. "A friend of mine recently applied for a job at a good Japanese company and was asked whether she had a boyfriend," she said. — Los Angeles Times.

Seoul urges US patrol as North crosses line

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

SOUTH KOREA has asked Washington to send Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft to patrol the peninsula, the South Korean news agency reported last night, after North Korea sent troops into the demilitarised zone between the two countries for the third time since Friday.

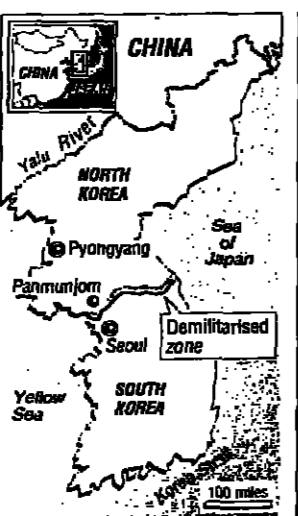
Escalating its challenge to a fragile peace along the cold war's last serious faultline, the North Koreans moved into the buffer strip yesterday, armed with mortars and heavy machine-guns.

The operation, lasting two and a half hours, was the largest of the three incursions so far by the North Korean People's Army into the demilitarised zone, a strip of land fixed at the end of the Korean war in 1953.

The United States, which has played down the risk of renewed conflict on the divided peninsula, faced mounting pressure to make a strong show of resolve, much as it did last month during tension between China and Taiwan.

The South Korean news agency Yonhap reported that officials representing Seoul and Washington were discussing the AWACS request.

North Korea announced on Thursday it would no longer



obey the rules of the 1953 armistice agreement that ended a three-year conflict in which about 4 million people died, but which left the Korean peninsula technically at war.

The 1953 accord bans heavy weapons from a 2.5-mile-wide buffer zone and allows each side to send only 35 military police armed with pistols into a joint security area at Panmunjom, 30 miles north of the South Korean capital, Seoul.

The US said no more than 180 North Korean troops were involved in yesterday's incursion at Panmunjom. But South Korea put the number

at 300-400. The government of President Kim Young-sam, tainted by the death of a student protester and corruption, has used rising tension to rally support before parliamentary elections this week.

More than 500,000 troops in South Korea have been placed on their highest level of alert for 15 years. A US military spokesman said the situation along the border was "tense and dangerous", but there had been no significant troop movements by either side.

The North Korean troops arrived in 12 trucks yesterday evening at Panmunjom — a popular destination for South Korean daytrippers — and left without incident.

North Korea has accused South Korea of preparing to attack and has said hostilities are now inevitable.

"If the Kim Young-sam ring provokes a war like a newborn puppy that is too young to be afraid of a tiger, our people and the People's Army will mercilessly smash the aggressors," North Korea's state-run radio warned.

The rhetoric and daily incursions at Panmunjom are seen less as a prelude to war than a risky diplomatic gambit to force Washington to recognise Pyongyang and enter direct talks on a formal peace treaty to end the 1950-53 war.

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Model Marxist may pose as India's saviour

Suzanne Goldenberg in Calcutta meets the honest though uncharismatic octogenarian premier of West Bengal, who is being urged to take on the prime minister in the coming election

AS INDIA'S political parties self-destruct amid corruption scandals and internal feuding, an octogenarian communist has emerged as a potential saviour, held in equally high esteem by captains of industry and the champions of the poor.

He is Jyoti Basu, aged 82, a capable rather than a charismatic politician who for 19 years has been the Communist Party of India (Marxist) chief minister of West Bengal.

While the country has produced several leaders with mass regional appeal, Mr Basu is widely viewed as the single politician with the national standing to take on the prime minister, P. V. Narasimha Rao, in general elections this month and next, and he has been entreated to declare himself.

Even if he does not put himself forward, Mr Basu could be the kingmaker should a coalition of regional and left-wing parties, the National Front-Left Front alliance, do well in the elections.

Although Mr Basu has shunned the usual myth-making of Indian politics — the giant cut-outs, the projection of politicians as the mums and dads of a nation — and never sought power at the national level, outside his na-

tive West Bengal, or even among non-leftwingers, he has a strong following.

Surabhi Bannerjee, an English professor who is writing an authorised biography, said: "He is the ideal embodiment of communist ideals. So far, I haven't met anyone who has said anything adverse about Jyoti Basu. Even ordinary people, they all have the image that Jyoti Basu is above board."

She attributes his popularity to his probity and his mystique. Mr Basu is known for his aversion to press intrusion into the lives of his businessmen son and his three granddaughters on whom the usually impassive politician dotes.

Apart from a media splash last year, when one granddaughter entered a beauty contest, the press generally respects his privacy.

So far, he says, he is not interested in becoming prime minister.

"My left party and other left parties don't have the strength. We don't take it seriously when people say why don't I become prime minister. What can one man do?"



In profile... Jyoti Basu, caught in his younger days

And within the last few years he has started to turn Calcutta around, erasing years of squalor and neglect. The eight-hour power cuts have become a distant memory, and people now reminisce fondly about a telephone system so notorious for its failures during the monsoon season that Calcuttans erected a memorial to the dead telephone.

The homeless have been bundled off the pavements of central Calcutta, and roads which once resembled moonscapes have been mended.

In September 1994 he did another apparent about-face, introducing a new industrial policy that actively courted foreign investment.

Calcutta's Ho Chin Minh, Lenin and Karl Marx streets

still exist, but the only red flag likely to be seen waving these days would be in the window of a car trying to negotiate traffic-clogged streets.

The government has dropped the hammer and sickle in favour of billboard slogans, such as: "The Left Front government is determined to develop West Bengal industrially."

Mr Basu says his version of liberalisation is far more cautious than the reforms the rest of India embraced in 1991.

"You have to have a policy by which you can create an internal market. We are not South Korea or Taiwan. India is huge. If you can create a market with land reforms and then panchayats, then that

will be good. We must not open our doors too wide."

His government is generally acknowledged to be one of the least corrupt in India, where the party, which has seen a degradation of public life.

But some critics say the fastidious and slightly dour Mr Basu has never escaped his middle-class roots. The son of an attorney, he joined the Communist Party of Great Britain while studying law at Middle Temple before the second world war.

After his return, he was the lone voice of the left for several years, in hiding from the British and later, jailed by the government of newly independent India. It was while he was on the run that the enduring anglophone finally learnt Bengali.

After 15 years, there are signs of discontent with his government, especially among urban voters and members of his own party who are unhappy with his free market enthusiasm.

But he remains unassailable. Virtually everyone expects his government to be returned to power in the state assembly elections which will be held in West Bengal on May 2 and May 7 — even the Congress (I) party which has formed national governments for most of India's history.

"Give us another five years and maybe the death or retirement of Jyoti Basu, and then maybe, maybe we will come," said Saugata Roy, a leading figure in the West Bengal Congress (I) party.

The fact that the present Prince Edward speaks so warmly of his greedy, racist and fascist great-aunt is a moving tribute to the onward march of progress in the Windsor family.
Paul Foot on the royals

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US to evacuate foreigners from besieged embassy

Warlords rampage in Liberian capital

Philip van Nieuwkerk in Monrovia

THE United States government prepared to evacuate dozens of foreign nationals from war in the Liberian capital yesterday amid intense combat between rival warlord factions which reduced the city to anarchy.

As buildings in Monrovia burned, tens of thousands of people streamed into the diplomatic enclave of Mamba on the southern tip of the city, seeking refuge in the US embassy compound. Looting combatants even advanced on this traditional safe haven, and a compound of the United Nations observer mission was ransacked.

Dudley Sims, the US embassy spokesman, said more than 40 British, American, Irish, and other nationals had sought refuge inside the compound. The airport terminal was burning and all roads out of the city were closed.

Helicopters and boats seem the only options for any evacuation. However, three helicopters at the airport, lent by the US to Ecomog, the West African peacekeeping force in Liberia, are understood to have been blown up.

Hundreds of armed youths rampaged through central Monrovia, sacking the city. Ecomog troops did nothing to



stop the looting; in most cases they were not even present. There were reports late yesterday that Ecomog tanks were finally being deployed in the town centre; this was too late to stop the destruction.

The battle began in the early hours of Saturday, when police and fighters loyal to the warlords Charles Taylor and Alhaji Kromah stormed the stronghold of a dissident faction leader, Roosevelt Johnson. The ruling council of state had ordered police to arrest Gen Johnson on charges of murder after a clash with militia rivals.

Although Gen Johnson's headquarters in the suburb of Finko was overrun early yesterday by fighters from Mr Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), members of his Krahn ethnic group put up stiff opposition

elsewhere in the city. Neither side appeared to have total control as street battles raged.

Krahn members of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and the Liberia Peace Committee, another signatory to the now collapsed peace accord signed last August, threw in their lot with Gen Johnson.

Mr Taylor's forces launched a farcical onslaught on the Barclay training centre in central Monrovia, the military barracks which is the home of the AFL militia. Witnesses said the barracks was yesterday by rocket-propelled grenades. The thud of water and rocket fire was heard outside the barracks throughout the day.

Plumes of black smoke hung over the city. People gathered under roadside shelters, huddling together during occasional wayward bursts from an AK-47.

Mr Taylor, a member of the council of state, who launched Liberia's civil war on Christmas Eve 1989, denied that militia rivalry was at the root of the fighting.

"This government, and not Mr Taylor of the NPFL, will do all it can to bring the situation under control and have General Johnson arrested," he said yesterday.

Gen Johnson refused to turn himself in, saying the police were biased and had been infiltrated by the NPFL.

Rifkind boosts Latin link

Ian Black Diplomatic Editor

BRITAIN'S dismal performance in selling its goods to Latin America is to be given a high-profile shove this week as the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, flies out to talk trade in one of the world's most economically dynamic regions.

Mr Rifkind, visiting Mexico, Brazil and Bolivia, will be telling his hosts that Britain wants to sell more to them. But he faces a tough task in convincing businessmen at home that he is not urging them to operate in a lost corner.

Officials in Whitehall despair of Britain's poor showing in Latin America, where — at 1.6 per cent — it has the smallest market share of all the Group of Seven (G7) key industrialised countries.

British exports have grown by a solid 6.6 per cent since 1991. But continent-wide Germany sells more than three times as much, and nearly four times in Brazil. Overall,

the market is dominated by the United States.

Latin America now figures prominently in the Government's attempts to pursue a global foreign policy — part of its effort to focus on emerging markets and move beyond politically driven obsessions with Europe.

Mr Rifkind's will be the fourth visit to the region by a foreign secretary in the past five years, compared with five in the preceding 30 years.

Diplomats and businessmen say political and economic changes have created a far more favourable environment for British business — though cultural and linguistic differences remain serious barriers.

"Latin America has woken up to the fact that free trade is a good thing," Ian Harding of the government-backed Latin American Trade Group said.

"It has democratised itself and privatised itself, by and large. Now the 17 countries we handle are what you could describe as democracies. Before, there were a vast number of military regimes. Now

the troops are back in the barracks and we believe and hope they are going to stay there."

Exports lag far behind the potential of the second-fastest area of world growth after the Pacific Rim. Yet in Mexico, Britain is the second-biggest overseas investor after the US. A further £2 billion of investments are held in Brazil.

Last year the Foreign Office and the Department of Trade and Industry launched the Link into Latin America campaign to raise the region's profile, but it has made little headway, partly because

many companies suffered in the debt crises of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Mexico's peso collapse was another blow.

"The good news hasn't yet filtered through to British companies," Mr Harding said. "Yes they have privatised, yes they have deregulated, no there are no currency controls, but the 17 countries we handle are what you could describe as democracies. Before, there were a vast number of military regimes. Now

French heartthrob rails at Hollywood invasion

Gallic 'traitors' have sold out for money, one star says. Alex Duval Smith reports

THE veteran French film star Jean-Paul Belmondo lashed out yesterday against the power of Hollywood, and the cultural "traitors" from France who are on their knees to United States film distributors.

In an interview to mark his 40-year career, Mr Belmondo lambasted the mayor of Paris, Jean Tiberi, for being "incompetent" and sprang to the defence of his new film, *Désiré*, given limited distribution at the expense of Disney's *Toy Story*.

The actor, aged 62, is still considered a heartthrob nearly 40 years after he made his name in Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless*.

He said: "French producers, while claiming to be the defenders of French cinema, are on their knees to the Americans."

He said it was a scandal that *Désiré*, in which he stars with Béatrice Dalle and Yann Ardan, will be released on Wednesday in just six cinemas, while *Toy Story*, released a fortnight ago, is showing on more than 500 of France's 2,000 screens.

Mr Belmondo, recently seen in Britain in *Les Mis-*

érables, appeared to accuse Mr Tiberi of philistinism. "I have just come back from the Champs-Élysées, the most beautiful avenue in the world, defaced by sculptures exhibited by the City of Paris," Mr Belmondo told the *Journal du Dimanche*.

'The Americans do not defend our films, they buy them for remakes. It is shameful to kneel at their feet'

The open-air exhibition, part of a city arts policy to popularise sculpture, features works by Ernst, Picasso and Giacometti. But Mr Belmondo said he was shocked not to see more works by French artists, including his father, Paul Belmondo.

He said his lawyer had telephoned the mayor, "who, of course, hides protectively behind his selection committee. He is incompetent, not only over

the arts but also the homeless."

After a cinema career including *Breathless* in 1959 and Jacques Dreyer's *Borsalino* in 1969, Mr Belmondo recently made a theatrical comeback with a world tour of *Cyrano*.

He recently went into hiding for four months after collapsing from exhaustion. His return coincides with a debate in France about the growth of multiplex cinemas.

He said he had complained about the distribution plans for the new film and had been told by its producer that it was a television film.

"*Désiré* is nothing of the kind. I accepted the role because it is a real and a good film," Mr Belmondo said, apparently insulted at having to compete with *Toy Story*, the first full-length film to be made entirely by computer animation.

He went on: "Not only do the Americans not defend our films, they buy them up just for remakes. It is shameful to kneel at their feet. Today, if you don't blow up planes or buildings, you are told you're making a television movie."

Producers and distributors have all the control. We have got to the stage where we are at the mercy of their goodwill. I doubt whether a new Godard could make another *Breathless* in this climate," he said.

Mr Belmondo, whose career was marked by a television documentary shown last night and a book, said his life had been an endless stroke of good luck.

"One minute, there I was reading *Cinéma Monde* and admiring pictures of Gina, Sophia and Brigitte Bardot. Then suddenly, I was holding them in my arms," he said.



Tears for the dead... A woman who survived the 1994 massacre of over 12,000 mostly Tutsis in the Gikongoro area of Rwanda breaks down at a commemoration service in Gikongoro to mark the second anniversary of the start of the genocide. PHOTOGRAPH: CORINNE DUFRAY

Barbed reminders of wartime relocation

The 'internment' of Japanese-Americans still pricks US consciences, writes Christopher Reed in Manzanar Camp

THE remains of the United States' most notorious "concentration" camp lie brooding against the magnificent backdrop of California's 13,000ft snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountains.

The site, officially Manzanar Relocation Centre, has long been shorn of the barracks where 10,000 Japanese-Americans — two-thirds of them US citizens — lived during the second world war. There remain two pagoda-style stone sentry posts, an auditorium, and a derelict ornamental garden.

At the entrance a US Park Service brass plaque says that "hysteria, racism and economic exploitation" caused the internment, and that Manzanar was a "concentration camp". Someone has chipped off the first "c".

Manzanar's long slumber in the remote Owens Valley, 250

miles from Los Angeles, has been disturbed by a heated debate between apologists and revisionists.

The parks department plans to restore parts of it as a reminder of what Congress called an injustice to Japanese-Americans. But many local people and critics elsewhere are outraged by what they regard as Uncle Sam's self-flagellation.

"It's not Uncle Sam but Uncle Sucker," James Lillian Baker, who published her third book on the subject, *American-Japanese Relocation in World War II: Fact, Fiction and Fallacy*, in 1994.

"Manzanar was not a concentration camp or an internment camp. That would be illegal. Remember, the US supreme court ruled that relocation was constitutional."

Ms Baker is correct in saying the court ruled by a ma-

jority of 5-4 that detention of the 110,000 Japanese-Americans was a military necessity. Although jurists have developed that decision, it was never reversed.

She has also infuriated ex-detainees' support groups and politicians, such as the Californian congressman Robert Matsui, a detainee as a child, who helped win \$20,000 (\$13,000) compensation for each internee's "human suffering".

'Manzanar inmates rioted on the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor, and the sentries shot two people dead'

Owens Valley people, many of them elderly with vivid war memories, say the detainees were not made to suffer and were free to leave.

"The authorities are presenting a completely false picture and it insults America," one says.

Locals deny the official account that eight watch-towers

with searchlights loomed over the camp, manned by armed sentries and surrounded by barbed wire. They say inmates were often seen walking around the small town of Independence, six miles away.

The East California museum in Independence has an exhibition of Manzanar days. Thousands of Americans and foreigners visit it annually on their way to Death Valley to the east.

But conditions weren't that harsh. Perhaps concentration camp was the wrong word — the Park Service is dropping it. But Manzanar inmates rioted on the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor, and the sentries shot two people dead.

The Japanese-Americans seen outside the camp were volunteers sent to help with the harvest in Idaho and Montana or to farm in inland states, he says. By 1945, 6,000 inmates had left Manzanar.

Locals saw those people move through, but they were being transported.

Ms Baker says the barbed wire was for cattle and the towers for spotting fires. She has read hundreds of documents since the authorities began to release them in 1980.

Her main argument is that Japanese-Americans often had joint citizenship and many were supporters of Japan's emperor, so they remained a security risk. What she cannot explain is that until 1945 none went home, even after the shootings.

News in brief

Nkomo says whites created Aids to exterminate blacks

BREAKING with local convention, Zimbabwe's vice-president and former guerrilla leader, Joshua Nkomo (right), announced on Saturday that his son, Ernest Thutani, had died of Aids, a disease he said was "harvested by whites to obliterate blacks".

In an emotional graveside speech, Mr Nkomo, aged 73, contended that whites had infected with the HIV virus that causes Aids. — AP.

But they just do not want to share that knowledge. The address reflected the lingering bitterness of the bush war waged by the black majority in the 1970s against white minority rule.

The speech marked a milestone in public openness about the disease. At least three cabinet ministers have died of Aids, but each time secondary infections were given as the cause of death.

An estimated 10 per cent of Zimbabwe's population are infected with the HIV virus that causes Aids. — AP.

Settlers and PLO held talks

Jewish settlers and Palestinian officials have held informal talks on coexistence for two years, officials from the two sides confirmed yesterday.

Sufian Abu Zaydeh, head of the Israel desk for the Palestinian self-rule Authority, said President Yasser Arafat was aware of the talks. Neither side would name settlers involved in the discussions. — Reuters.

Auschwitz protest

A group of Polish nationalists demonstrated at the weekend at the former Nazi death camp Auschwitz, demanding that Jewish organisations should be barred from having a say over the site's administration. — Reuters.

Saudi-Qatar deal

Saudi Arabia and Qatar yesterday agreed to end a border dispute which has strained relations between the two rich Gulf Arab states and led to armed clashes. — Reuters.

Border deaths

The cat-and-mouse game between illegal Mexican immigrants and US border patrol agents claimed seven lives at the weekend when a pick-up truck crashed near a checkpoint. *Christopher Reed in Los Angeles writes.* It was the same spot, the town of Temecula 60 miles north of the border, where last week a chase of another truck began. That chase ended in a videotaped police beating.

Arson in Bahrain

Explosives in boot-trapped cigarette packets set off three fires damaging shops in Bahrain yesterday, the latest in a string of arson attacks in the Gulf Arab state, the official Gulf News Agency reported. — Reuters.

Pope's message

The Pope led Catholics in Easter celebrations yesterday and prayed for a victory over death in Bosnia, Ireland, the Middle East, Algeria and the world's other troublespots. The 75-year-old Pontiff looked less weary as he addressed a crowd of 100,000 people in St Peter's Square than he had during Good Friday rituals. — Reuters.

Defector resettles

A Damascus-based former Iraqi military intelligence chief has decided to settle in Jordan, Jordanian officials said yesterday. — Reuters.

Chechen fighting

Russian and Chechen forces fought for control of isolated villages despite a declaration by President Boris Yeltsin that his forces had halted operations. Interfax news agency said yesterday. — Reuters.

Ecuador avalanche

An avalanche buried at least 20 mountain climbers staying in a shelter on the volcano Cotopaxi on Saturday, killing at least six of them, authorities in Ecuador said. — AP.

Rio grand for sex

A poll in Rio de Janeiro's *Globo* newspaper yesterday showed that 48 per cent claimed to have sex at least three times a week and 17 per cent said they made love to their partners once a day. Respondents also said each session lasted between 30 and 60 minutes, but 44 per cent of women confessed to faking orgasms. — Reuters.

Bosnian Serbs give ground on POWs

BOSNIAN Serbs have acted to resolve the issue of prisoners of war but still face exclusion from a financial donors' conference in Brussels next week, international mediators said yesterday.

The Office of the High Representative to Bosnia said the Bosnian Serbs had handed

over 16 files of evidence on prisoners they hold to the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

The Bosnian Serbs are keeping 16 POWs in defiance of the peace deal and instructions that they either release them or provide some proof they should face prosecution

for war crimes. But of the 16 dossiers only 13 relate to known POWs. The other three concerned detainees whose captivity was previously unknown.

The Serbs are still deemed to be in breach of the peace deal, the High Representative said. — Reuters.

Why is everyone talking Yakult?

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Security or paranoia?
Why new MI5 needs watching

THE SECURITY Service, better known as MI5, will have a new director-general tomorrow. Stephen Lander, the agency's former director of Irish counter-terrorism, will take over the mantle left by the formidable Stella Rimington. It will be a hard act to follow. Mrs Rimington, the first head of MI5 to be officially identified and the first female head of the agency, proved to be an accomplished Whitehall fighter, even though, as far as the Home Office and ministers were concerned, she was largely pushing at open doors. During her five-year tenure of office, MI5 took away from the Metropolitan Police Special Branch lead responsibility for countering IRA-sponsored terrorism on the mainland. It also took on responsibility for "protective security advice" both to the Government and to what MI5's new brochure describes as "those elements of commerce and industry whose services and products are of critical national economic or civil importance". The new Security Service Act now going through Parliament for the first time extends MI5's responsibility beyond the protection of "national security" to combating "serious crime". The bill adopts an extremely broad definition of serious crime borrowed from the 1985 Interception of Communications Act. It includes offences involving "conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose". This term might include all sorts of groups, including those protesting against the Newbury bypass, and animal rights activists.

Even before the breakdown in the IRA ceasefire, MI5 insisted that only a very few of its agents would support the law enforcement agencies — the police and Customs — in fighting serious crime. But the new bill is an enabling act, giving MI5 wide scope in the future. And the arrangements for co-operation between MI5 and the police remain far from clear. Meanwhile, MI5 has kept hold of its role protecting national security against home-grown "subversion". Its new brochure says MI5 "is interested in the activities of the subversive elements, not in the groups they seek to penetrate". It avoids the question of how it targets allegedly subversive individuals without at the same time gathering information on other members of the group.

And now the police are fighting back. After years privately criticising MI5 for the lack of hard intelligence on the IRA, the police have persuaded ministers (and Jack Straw, the shadow home secretary) of the need for draconian new powers. The Prevention of Terrorism (Additional Powers) Act, rushed through Parliament at the end of last week, allows the police to randomly search people and property in "designated areas" without any suspicion of their being terrorists. For the first time, it will become an offence not to agree to being searched. This week, chief constables will meet to consider a proposal that Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch should take the lead role in operations against anti-road and other environmental protests.

It seems we are drifting into a climate of paranoia over security, with serious implications for civil liberties and the principle of democratic accountability. The Labour frontbench appears desperate to avoid the charge of being "soft" on security and law and order. But even ministers cannot possibly know what the security and intelligence services are up to. The devil is in the detail, as, in a different context, the Scott arms-to-Iraq inquiry so clearly demonstrated. A line has to be drawn establishing clearly-defined limits on the functions, powers and activities of the security and intelligence services. Clear lines of accountability should be established.

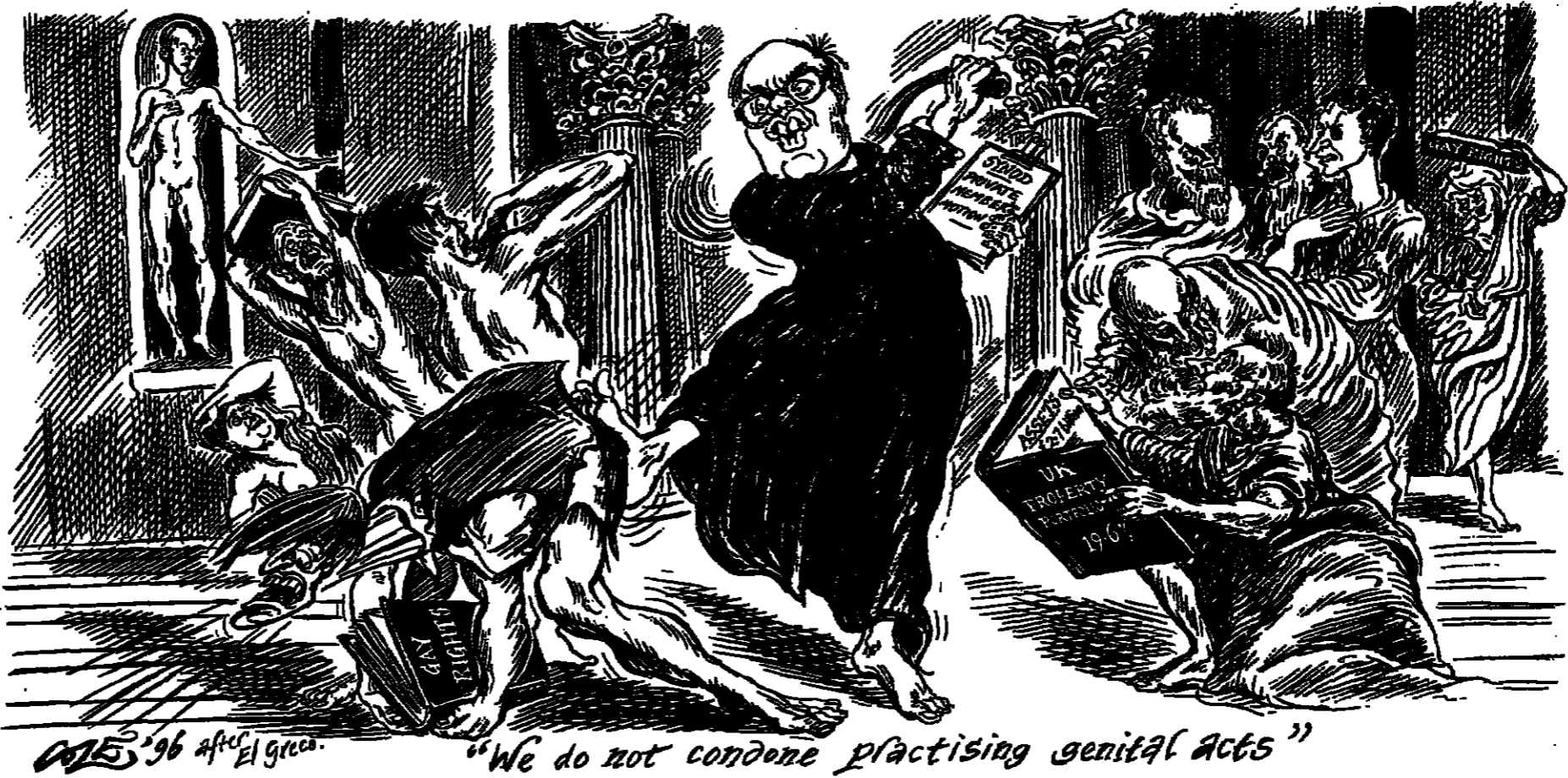
Stephen Lander could get off to a good start by abandoning MI5's anti-subversion role. MPs should demand a proper parliamentary committee, appointed by the Commons, to oversee the activities of the agencies. And the Government should appoint a cabinet minister with special responsibility for security and intelligence matters. There are few areas where eternal vigilance is so necessary.

Pyongyang's play

But who is the real audience?

NORTH KOREA'S unsettling manoeuvres in the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) recall a similar performance just recently in another East Asian tension spot. Then it was Beijing, trying to ratchet up the pressure on President Lee Teng-hui in the Taiwanese elections. Now it is Pyongyang, seeking to destabilise President Kim Young-sam ahead of Thursday's National Assembly elections. The Chinese leadership, poorly placed now to urge caution on the North Koreans, may have additional reason to regret their forceful tactics which only brought out more votes for Mr Lee. Pyongyang's performance may have a similar effect in mobilising conservative support for Mr Kim's ruling party. But there is another more disturbing comparison. China's posturing in the Taiwan Straits seemed in part to reflect army pressure upon the Communist Party leadership to act more forcefully. North Korea's action hints more strongly at tension between the army and the party and must add an extra element of unease.

The crisis began with a statement issued on March 29 by the North Korean armed forces vice-minister Marshal Kim Kwang-chin suggesting that the 1953 armistice had become obsolete. Pyongyang regularly complains of South Korea's alleged warlike preparations whenever Seoul conducts military exercises. But, except 20 years ago during the famous "axe incident", Pyongyang has made a point of observing the restrictions placed on the joint security area at Panmunjom. And it has never gone quite so far as to suggest that the two Koreas are actually "on the eve of war". Marshal Kim's statement contains a still more remarkable feature: it refers to South Korean suggestions that the damage caused by last year's disastrous floods could cause "someone to collapse" and it complains that Seoul has "dared to vilify our supreme leadership." North Korean readers of this statement will have no trouble in reading between the lines: they are being informed of speculation in the south that the Dear Leader Kim Jong-il is in political trouble and that the succession to his father the late Kim Il-sung is not completely secure. Even to hint at such an idea must be regarded, according to the narrow rules of North Korean discourse, as an amazing admission. These suggestions from the south are supposed to be a "provocation" against the north, but if so who is being provoked? The real crisis may be less in the DMZ than in the workers' paradise of Pyongyang.



Letters to the Editor

The Church on Carey Street

I AM a member of General Synod and found the interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury quite depressing (Outsider at helm of "waking giant", April 6). The Church Commissioners may have improved their assets but they will need this income to support the growing numbers of retiring clergy and their partners, the reduction of their augmentation to dioceses will continue with devastating impact on those dioceses, like my own, with fewer historic assets.

The Church of England does have a serious credibility problem and it is compounded by an archbishop who, with his growing number of evangelical and conservative supporters, is leading us further away from the broad, inclusive nature of Anglicanism, and falling in three vital respects.

Firstly, the revival of medieval supernaturalism is failing many people in our nation who are seeking to develop a spirituality which seriously engages with contemporary life. Secondly, it is failing many people, including many of its own clerical and lay members, by refusing to face

up to new thinking about human sexuality. This is not a minority issue: it affects those of us who are parents, friends, colleagues and neighbours of lesbian and gay people, and growing numbers of others who are choosing non-traditional forms of family. Thirdly, the Church fails to show that it has any serious contribution to make to the great questions of public life.

Many evangelicals have difficulty with issues about which the Lord has not left us the benefit of his thinking — hence their obsession with personal morality.

The Church of England, with its historic concern for all souls, its embrace of diversity and its geographical spread, could offer open spaces for many more people to explore their questions and doubts. To do this, it would need to help them to belong and be less concerned with rigid behaviour and belief. Sadly, its obsession with vigour, confidence and profitability may lead it even further away from the majority of the nation's hearts and minds.

(Rev) Ian Stubbs, 21 Warrick Hall Road, Oldham OL8 4BG.

IS GEORGE Carey fully aware of the dilemma he is in? On the one hand, he wants the Church to speak out more strongly on moral issues. On the other, he plans to restore its flagging finances. But can prophecy and profit-making ever be combined?

How, for example, can a Church so dependent upon the support of farmers and landowners — and what its commissioners call "the high quality of the agricultural portfolio" — ever deal with the ethical and spiritual dimensions of the current cattle crisis? Has it the moral authority to deal with the consequences of so much cruelty, arrogance and greed? Rosemary & Jeremy Goring, 12 Keers Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1TY.

THE role of Dr Carey as jet-setting mini-Pope is embarrassing. Apart from the wasted funds of his expenses, Britain is in dire need of spiritual assistance, deliverance from materialism and wastage of young people. Let him put our house in order. Rose M Moloney, The Lightbulb, 22 Bove Town, Glastonbury BA5 8JG.

IT IS a ridiculous for Christians to complain that Good Friday is treated as a normal day (April 6); for most of us, it is a normal day. It is also ridiculous for the Bishop of Coventry to complain that Christians cannot go to church on Good Friday: like everyone else, they can take a day off their holiday entitlement to do what they want. Nicholas Walter, Rationalist Press Association, 88 Islington High Street, London N1 8EW.

FIND it predictable but laughable that Timothy Kirkhope chooses to criticise the Church of Scotland (Kirk and state in asylum row, April 5). To accuse the Church of Scotland of moralising is a bit much coming from a government which had called for the Christian Church to give a moral lead. He asks what immigration officers should do if forced by a church minister to stop doing their duty. I would suggest they do for themselves what they want to do to asylum seekers — go home.

(Rev) Maryn J Coe, United Reform Church, 29 Crickwood Road, Mackworth, Derby DE22 4DP.

How the CSA can help break up your family

ROGER Singleton (Letters, April 6) says plans to further cut lone parents' benefits for not co-operating with the CSA will mean some parents facing an iniquitous choice between poverty and violence.

To date, 118,000 women have "disappeared" off benefit thanks to the CSA. The Government, without providing any shred of evidence, says they were "previously fraudulent claimants" and makes no effort to explain how these women and their children now survive. However, it is much more likely that they feared reprisals from ex-partners who blame them, instead of the Government, for their new levels of impoverishment.

The CSA coerces mothers into co-operating and then contacts fathers to tell them it was the mother who requested the intervention of the agency to assess and enforce maintenance. Given this promoted culture of division through misinformation, it is not surprising (though still utterly intolerable) that ignorant men react, so badly, when faced with state-induced destitution.

This month's doubling of the weekly minimum maintenance payment to \$4.80 (mostly from the already means-tested money of the 41 per cent of CSA fathers on benefit) will compound violence and harassment. This is the truth behind the Treasury-driven CSA, which is a tool of this economically and morally bankrupt government. Russell Cavanagh, 21 Falcon Road West, Edinburgh EH10 4AD.

THE total charges for the state supporting a lone mother until her child is 16 — made up to income support, community charge benefit, Housing Benefit, school dinners and the cost of divorce — amounts to as much as £164,000. Had this sum been offered to stressed parents prior to separation, it could, for 14 years, have purchased 24.7 hours of weekly baby-sitting, or home help, with ample change left towards family holidays.

With priorities like this, it is understandable why Britain leads the European league of fatherless homes. Eugen Hockenos, 35 Batchelor Street, London N1 0EG.

A victim writes

AS THE survivor of a brutal rape, whilst I was asleep in my own home, perpetrated by a man I knew well, I think Lord Donaldson's fear that increased sentences might encourage rapists or violent offenders to kill (An unwise move, April 4) sounds like a charter for rapists to set their own sentences.

The man who raped me had been to prison twice for sexual assault on girls on two separate occasions, and is an intelligent, articulate and outwardly charming person. He has not responded to probation initiatives to rehabilitate him, nor been persuaded to desist from sex offending by short spells in prison. The only tenable solution to determined repeat sex offenders is a life sentence.

I for one, would be pleased to see a bit more welfarist, liberal sentencing. Until you have had the violence and terror of having the inside of your body invaded by the aggression of some deranged man's anger, then I don't feel you are qualified to speak. Name and address supplied.

(Maths)² x Berkeley = guilty

LET'S HAVE less mathematical prejudice, please. Your correspondent Ian Katz (April 3), convicts Theodore Kaczynski — the FBI's prime suspect in the 1990s, a "botched self-writing activist" — on two counts: he was a mathematician specialising in "the recalcitrant area of so-called complex analysis"; and he held a temporary position at Berkeley in the 1960s, a "hotbed of self-writing activism".

I've got news for your readers. Complex analysis is taught to every first-year science and engineering student and has been routinely used for at least a century in thousands of applications including, for example, calculating the performance of electric motors. As regards count two, what was mainly exercising the FBI's imagination was Berkeley in the late 1960s was the Vietnam war. We wanted to stop it; in other words, fewer bombs not more. If that is left-wing activism, then let's have more of it. Mark Davis, 11 Chardwell Avenue, London, SW15 6DT.

Letters to the Editor may be faxed on 0171 837 4530 or sent by post to 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER, and by e-mail to letters@guardian.co.uk.

Credibility gap

YOUR report on the call for the abolition of Ofsted (April 4) would certainly ring some bells among some of my primary school colleagues. Our most recent visit of an Ofsted inspector's skills included:

Presentation: a one-and-a-half hour, line-by-line reading of material given as handouts. G Scarborough, 65 Haven Lane, London W5 2HZ.

HOW can we take seriously journalists' exposure reports of fraudsters when, according to Roy Greenslade (April 4), these very same journalists spend their working life fiddling their expenses and thus defrauding their employers? Philip Knightley, 4 Northumberland Place, London W2 5BS.

A Country Diary

BROADLAND, NORFOLK: On this issue, the ancient Greeks were definitely odd-one-out. Homer, for instance, could detect none of the magical qualities in their voice. To him, they sounded like the clamour of an army advancing into battle. Even more strange, he reckoned them wicked creatures which flew south in winter to escape destruction upon Africa's pyramids. However, a more typical response is shown in India, where Rajasthan merchants spend a winter fortune feeding a wintering flock of several thousand and consider themselves fortunate to do so because of the birds' highly suspicious status. Even in a secular, superstition-free zone like Britain it seems this bird can revive a flicker of ancient awe, for the farmers of East Norfolk put out potatoes to feed on. Their own minuscule population.

The species is the common crane and it has returned to breed here after an absence of 300 years. Once widespread in British wetlands, they were gradually eliminated by agricultural drainage and became extinct in the 17th century. Despite this inadvertent loss, it is easy to see why humans have been compelled by cranes. They are so tall that in many countries they are equal in height to the average man. In fact, the scientific name of one species is *antropoides*. They are also reputed to be long-lived and, until death separates them, they remain faithful to a single partner. These anthropic associations are fascinating, but nothing quite inspires me like the sight of the birds themselves flying in to their night-time roost. On my last visit, the sun was already down when I spotted six pale forms looming over the reed beds. Within a few seconds their powerful rhythmic wing beats had carried them to the heart of the marsh, where they dropped their long necks and, until death separates them, they remain faithful to a single partner. These anthropic associations are fascinating, but nothing quite inspires me like the sight of the birds themselves flying in to their night-time roost. On my last visit, the sun was already down when I spotted six pale forms looming over the reed beds. Within a few seconds their powerful rhythmic wing beats had carried them to the heart of the marsh, where they dropped their long necks and, until death separates them, they remain faithful to a single partner. These anthropic associations are fascinating, but nothing quite inspires me like the sight of the birds themselves flying in to their night-time roost. On my last visit, the sun was already down when I spotted six pale forms looming over the reed beds. 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Chernobyl Diary

James Meek

SASHA'S mum lives in the zone. It's handy, it means he can drop in for a chat and a cup of tea while the visitors are gawking at the human beings who dwell in the fallout-hot footprint of the world's worst nuclear accident. When Andrei, the guide, and I stopped by to pick her up, Sasha's mum was sitting at the table, and she's 76 years old and as hard as nails.

Sasha and Andrei were downcast, partly because of exhaustion from taking visitors round the site, partly because of the visitor's reaction to the Chernobyl radiation safari without a proper break. Sometimes Andrei has to sleep in the back of their battered old Volga sedan — and partly because of what Sasha reckons is the misery she shares with the other (plus \$11 for lunch) each foreign visitor.

Sasha's mum introduced herself as Granny Motya. Sasha urged us to join him in eating the fresh-laid eggs. Andrei kept his company but I didn't because I was trying to keep faith with a solemn promise I made to myself before entering the 30-kilometre zone around the reactor not to eat anything there. The eggs were raw, so much the better.

Sasha and Andrei sucked morosely on the mud-flecked eggs while Granny Motya had another go at the foreigner. Glasses appeared and clear spirit was poured into them up to the brim. She laid out salt, thick slices of white pork fat, raw garlic and bread. A classic Ukrainian meal, particularly since the spirit was not vodka but a distilled sorghum and a single glass is enough to set you up for the next eight hours. It also turned out to be enough to remove inhibitions about eating zone food and after a while I popped a clove, salted a crust and got wired into the pork fat.

"This didn't come from your own pig, did it?" Yes, said Granny Motya proudly. Well, there you go. At least their government had declared the villagers' milk fit to drink — like ours said it was perfectly safe to eat British beef.

A neighbour dropped by to share a humanitarian aid, lucky bag she'd just been given by a passing American evangelist. There was toothpaste, shampoo, chocolate. We saw the evangelist later, eating his \$11-lunch in the Chernobyl canteen. He was the nearest thing to a mutant we saw in the zone: a gigantic man with a supernaturally loud voice.

Sasha appreciates the effect the Chernobyl disaster has had on the local wildlife. Largely deserted, uncultivated, and completely empty of the weekend hunters who used to swarm into the area from Kiev, the forests, marshes and heathland around the river Pripyat teem with wild boar, deer, lynx, wolf and beaver. It is like the dream of a humanity-joying eco-fanatic or Tarkovsky's Zone in his film Stalker. After the disaster the beasts have lost their fear of man.

Two deer ran across the road in front of our car. Further on, Sasha stopped on the bridge over the canal which carries cooling water from the still working reactors. The water was as thick with fish as tadpole soup in a spring puddle.

WE DROVE through the abandoned town of Pripyat, near the reactor complex 10 years on, sturdily spilling and growing in the doorways of the shops. It's a town of mysteries. Who is breaking into the derelict flats and severing the strings of all the pianos the fleeing inhabitants left behind? The sunshine is brilliant: we rattled off away from the reactors. Andrei pointed out a complex of dykes and barrows on either side of the road: Soviet burial mounds, filled with trees and bushes, the graves were to be left above ground. A little further on were villages which had been razed, nothing but fragments of walls and their stoves left standing. How did they burn down? We passed pine woods, looking benignly green under the clear blue sky. But among the pines are dark patches of jagged, black trunk-remnants, trees petrified and ground still sterile, a decade after the monster in reactor number four opened its jaws once and breathed a hot breath of radiation and fallout downward. Nature is not invulnerable.

I NEVER WERE ALL BORN UNDER A CUNARD CRUISE.



Gospel according to the party line

Commentary

Mark Lawson

IN THE currently popular movie, Dead Man Walking, the Catholic nun and the death-row inmate who are its protagonists fail to discuss scripture, but the convict soon retreats. "Never get into Bible quinn' with a nun," he admonishes himself. Proving even braver, Tony Blair has chosen to get into Bible quinn' with Baroness Thatcher, Ann Widdecombe, Brian Mawhinney and others in the religious wing of the Conservative Party.

In a newspaper interview timed for yesterday's significant day in the Christian calendar, the Labour leader discussed his religious beliefs. The key phrases in his credo were: "My view of Christian values led me to oppose what I perceived to be the narrow view of self-interest that Conservatism — particularly its modern, more right-wing form — represents. Tories, I think, have too narrow a definition of self-interest. They fail to look beyond to the community and the individual's relationship

with the community." Religious belief has always been ecumenically distributed across politics — for example, most Reaganites were committed Christians while very many leading British trade unionists were devout Catholics — so Blair's claims have prompted a familiar burst of annotation of parables, parsing of psalms as the rival parties try to sign up God as a member.

Deliberately or not, the Labour leader's declaration of faith stands as a direct challenge to Margaret Thatcher's 1989 address, while prime minister, to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in which she explained the Christian basis of her own politics.

On another occasion, Mrs Thatcher — an apostate Methodist who came to see her adopted Church of England as an enclave of lefties — offered the inspired analysis that the Good Samaritan was only able to help the victim on the Jericho road because he was rich: his personal enterprise put him in the position to buy the oil and bandages and meet the bill.

Now — in response to Blair's theological justification of New Labour — Ann Widdecombe, once an Anglican and now a Catholic, has offered a Conservative commentary on the Biblical injunction: "Let he who hath two coats give one to him that hath none." While some have seen this as

divine support for the idea of the redistribution of wealth, the junior Home Office minister stresses that the onus is on the individual to give up the spare garment of their own volition; there is no suggestion, she reminds us, that the clothing should be confiscated by the state.

Some enterprising religious publisher might usefully put together a little volume of "Tory commentaries on the parables. For surely it is more than likely that the man with two coats only had two because of competition in the Palestinian garment industry. And Lazarus, if you think about it, was clearly resuscitated not by organised state medical apparatus but by a form of private medicine, which is obviously one in the eye for the NHS.

Religion frequently proves to be a prism for a worshipper's deepest personal concerns and politicians are no exception. Jonathan Raban, in a brilliant commentary on Thatcher's Church of Scotland address, pointed out her obsession with the fact that Christ, according to theology "chose" to die on the cross. She seemed to see His passion and death as a grand version of her own grandiose scheme alternatives for home-owners, parents or consumers.

Blair's comments yesterday on the Passion are perhaps equally revealing of his own preoccupations. His commen-

tary presents the Easter story as a tragedy of the agonies of decision-making and rule. He focuses on Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, praying to "let this cup pass from me" but knowing that it was His (Blair's word) "duty" to carry on with the mission.

He is most fascinated, though, by the figure of Pontius Pilate. He is not alone in this. The Roman governor has become something of a modern icon — his ancient question, "What is truth?", bubbles unthinkingly almost every aspect of contemporary culture — but the Labour leader presents him as a test-case in crisis management.

"One can envisage Pilate's advisers telling him of the risks," Blair says. "Warning him not to cause a riot or inflame Jewish opinion. It is a timeless parable of political life... his is the struggle between what is right and what

In short, Blair sees the Crucifixion as a failure of party management

is expedient that has occurred throughout history."

Yet here Blair is putting a personal — and, perhaps, rather revealing — spin on the story. For Matthew — the gospel which (as Blair points out) has most coverage of these events — makes no mention at all of Pilate having advisors. Indeed, the evangelist clearly states that it was Pilate himself who came up with the idea of offering the people a choice between releasing Jesus or Barabbas, thus becoming by no means the first leader in history to seek to solve his problems with a referendum.

This is not, though, how the

Labour leader sees it. He apparently imagines some gruff first century Alastair Campbell nutting in the Roman governor's ear: "I agree with you, PP. The geezer's almost certainly innocent. But that's not what the reader's poll in the Galliee Sun is saying. Let him go and you can kiss a second term goodbye." Meanwhile, Mandelson the high priest silkily whispers: "There is, Governor, the referendum option. Constitutionally, you get to release a prisoner today. Offer them this Jesus or Barabbas. Barabbas has got such high negatives, he's off the scale. You think they're gonna vote for a convicted robber over this dresner with a beard?" Pilate finally chooses the constitutional option, at which point, having condemned an innocent man to death, the governor's people try to recover the situation with a photo-op in which he washes his hands of the matter.

In short, Blair sees the Crucifixion as a failure of party management. Pilate as a man buffeted between contending sides. Blair chooses the constitutional option, at which point, having condemned an innocent man to death, the governor's people try to recover the situation with a photo-op in which he washes his hands of the matter.

These messages seem incompatible with the aptitude and focus groups which are two of the dominant props of New Labour. Indeed, we cynically assume that even the question of whether or not the leader should discuss religion so publicly was the subject of much debate among his advisors. But Blair's Easter exegesis has offered an intriguing insight into the struggles in his mind as he approaches his own temptations and possible triumph.

Handsomely paid up to play the game



Paul Foot

NO ONE came out worse from the Scott report than Sir Colin Chandler, chairman of Vickers. Sir Colin was head of the Ministry of Defence Export Sales Organisation (DESO) from 1965-88, and he was severely criticised by Scott for his role in the notorious Hastie affair. Hastie was Chandler's successor as marketing director of Britain's biggest arms company, British Aerospace. When he was "seconded" to DESO under Chandler, his job was to sell British Aerospace Hawk fighter jets to the Iraqi dictatorship. Scott described the conflict of interest here as "plain as a pikestaff", and denounced it roundly.

How did this powerful denunciation go down in the Vickers' boardroom? The board's remuneration committee set to work to make absolutely sure that Sir Colin will be secure in his old age.

To their horror they found that Sir Colin's pension entitlements had been "capped" by a provision in the 1988 Finance Act introduced by that well-known scourge of the wealthy, Nigel Lawson. In the six years after 1988, when Sir Colin joined the company, the Lawson "cap", a futile attempt to cut down on the abuse of tax privileges on pensions, had deprived Sir Colin of £718,000. At once, the remuneration committee paid £718,000 into a "supplementary retirement scheme".

On further reflection, the committee considered a mere £718,000 nothing like enough. After all, he would have to pay tax on the £718,000. So the payment into Sir Colin's scheme was "topped up" by the amount of tax he would have to pay: a further £478,700. For good measure, this was "topped up" once again with a further £31,260 to cover the tax he would have to pay on his earnings below the Lawson "cap". This brought the total 1995 "remuneration" (or "swag" as it is more widely known in the City of London) to £867,788, a rise of just over £100,000 on the previous year. I realise that as a matter of course anyone criticised in the Scott report must expect to be promoted and mollified, but who among the many criticised, even the Attorney General, can claim to have been more handsomely treated than Sir Colin?

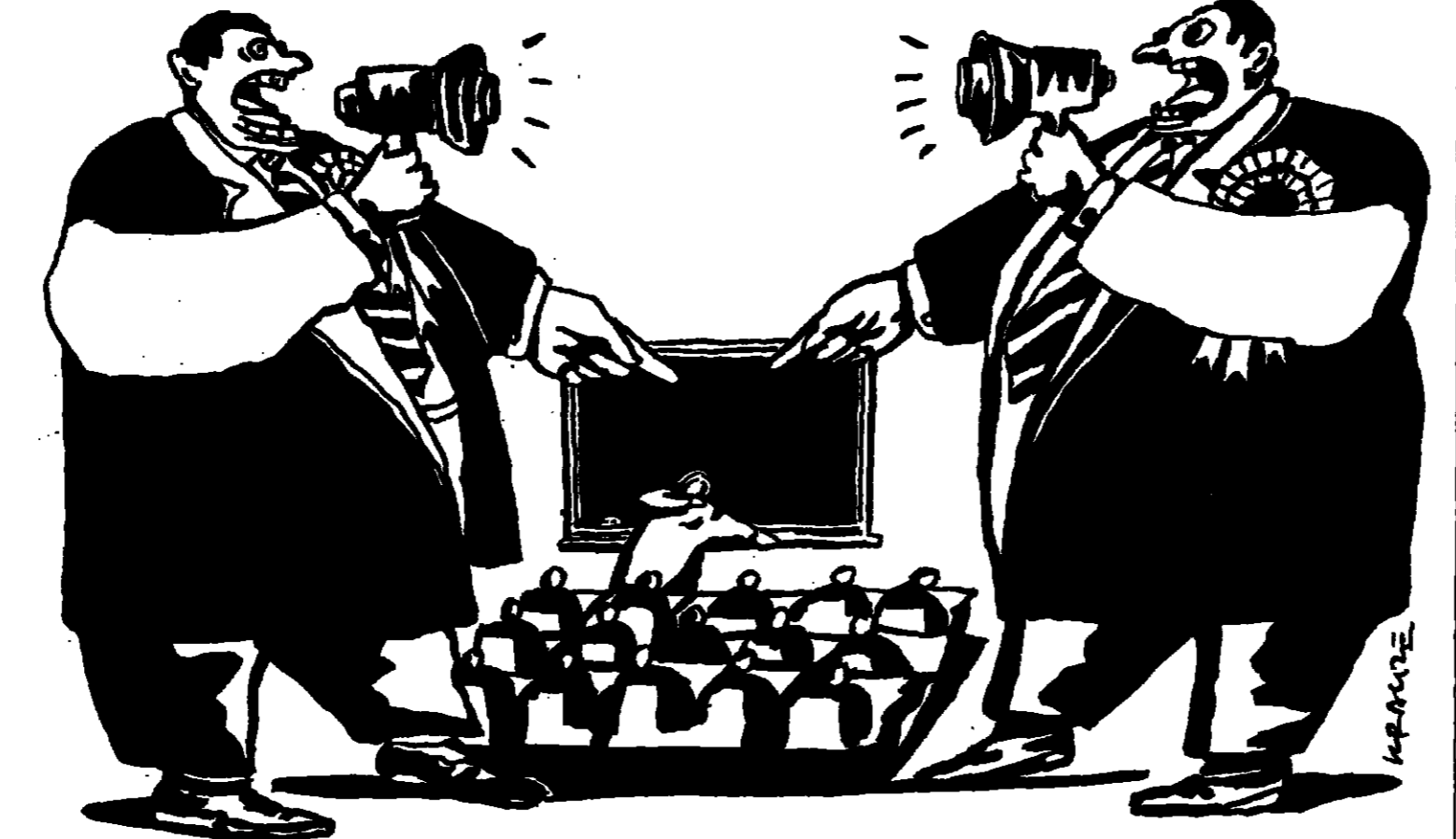
The Vickers bonanza is another sign of the huge cultural shift in British capitalism. Until recently its heroes were the careful, fair-minded, public-spirited burghers of the Victorian middle class: people

like the Northern founders of the building societies. A few weeks before he was deposed for irregularities in his expenses, the chief executive of the Woolwich, David Robinson, announced that he had switched churches. Out went the fuddy-duddy Methodist values of mutuality. In came Good Old Avarice, the end of mutuality and the "commercialisation" of building societies into banks. There is only one reason for this stampede which is relentlessly sweeping building societies into the gutter: to enrich directors with ridiculous salaries and share options. Since the money for this enrichment, and for the new shareholders' dividends, must come from somewhere, the inevitable result is a worse deal for savers and investors. The directors boast that their decision to "commercialise" must be put to a vote of all savers and investors. This vote, however, is unique. Its central feature is bribery. The real question is not: "Do you think it's right that mutuality should be replaced by avarice?" (likely answer: no). But: "Do you want to receive £1,000 for nothing?" (likely answer: yes).

Alan Howarth MP, who was elected in 1987, is being "groomed" to inherit the safe Labour seat of Wentworth. I wonder whether his "grooms" ever reflect on the purpose of the House of Commons. Is it a representative assembly or a stable where thoroughbred politicians can swap parties and seats according to their whims?

Fortunately, Labour Party members resent being treated as voting fodder for the great and the good. They recall that Alan Howarth supported the miners' strike, the poll tax and the destruction of the coal industry. And their message to Mr Howarth and his grooms is a simple one: get lost.

"PALACE was so hard on Wallis's headline, which accurately summed up what Prince Edward is pleased to call his "research" on his namesake, Edward VIII, who "gave up everything for love". What appears to be missing from this princely research (the not altogether trivial fact that Wallis Simpson, later the Duchess of Windsor, was a fascist. I don't mean that as a term of general abuse. She was a real and dedicated fascist, who hobnobbed half her youth with glamorous young fascists from the entourage of Mussolini. In America and China she did everything in her power to extend the influence of her beloved fascist. In Britain she did even better — she married the king. The couple continued to conspire with fascism until it was finally vanquished. The fact that the present Prince Edward speaks so warmly of his greedy, racist and fascist great-aunt is a moving tribute to the onward march of progress in the Windsor family.



Education is losing votes for the Tories; John Carvel doubts that Gillian Shephard will be able to turn it into an electoral winner

Learning sweve

TO THE tune of Guantanamo, the education correspondents of papers from across the political spectrum gave voice on Saturday to a short summary of events at the National Union of Teachers' conference in Cardiff.

"There are two Gillian Shephards..." they sang, after the Education Secretary left a televised news conference at which she claimed she had just given the profession a sharp reminder that the Government would entertain "no turning back" in its programme of schools reform. Perhaps her phrase was meant to echo Margaret Thatcher's famous party conference soundbite: the lady is not for turning. It was certainly designed to put over the message that Mrs Shephard is no part of the cosy educational establishment which used to embrace the teaching unions, local education authorities, academics and the relevant Whitehall officials and their ministers.

She bolstered it by evoking a complaint about the damage done to the teaching profession by the "childish and old-fashioned antics" of a ragtag of Trotskyite newspaper sellers outside the hall, who mysteriously posed such a threat to her security that she had to be ushered in by a side entrance.

The trouble was that this abusive tone was a long way removed from the emboldened approach which the other Mrs Shephard had just adopted in the conference hall, where she deliberately made no mention of the Government policies which have most angered the teachers, notably the introduction of nursery vouchers, primary

school league tables and a return to grammar schools. In fairness to Mrs Shephard, it should be recognised that the speech was an ordeal. After the mobbing of David Blunkett at a fringe meeting during the NUT conference in Blackpool last year, she could not be sure that the platform would not be rushed by one or other of the leaving teachers' factions which jostle for the limelight on these occasions.

For a woman of five foot two to address this audience was an act of courage, although as it turned out the delegates showed surprising self-restraint, using only a silent protest against her selection to express their deep hostility to Government policies.

Mrs Shephard's political career could have done with something rather more dramatic. John Major picked her for the job two years ago to restore calm to a department wrecked by the erratic excesses of her predecessor, John Patten. Her charming commonsense approach restored peace to the classroom and allowed progress to be made on a raft of minor reforms to lift teaching standards.

Then during the summer holidays last year, the Prime Minister rashly decided that education would be the field on which he would fight an ideological battle with a Labour Party weakened by the embarrassment of Tony Blair's choice of a partially-selective grant-maintained school for his son, Euan. Having sensibly chosen Mrs Shephard to take education out of the headlines, he now wanted her to stoke the flames of political controversy. It did not escape the attention of the right-wing ideologues that she was

dragged reluctantly to accept the proposals for nursery vouchers and the progressive dismantling of comprehensive education which will be outlined in a white paper in June, and is likely to be sumped up into an eye-catching manifesto commitment.

It is also unlikely to have escaped the attention of Cabinet colleagues earlier this year that the bookmakers' odds on her becoming the next Tory leader — at 10 to one — were considerably better than those given to many who thought themselves her senior.

Over the last few weeks the whispering campaign against her has become seriously threatening and spilled over into the right-wing newspapers. On Saturday a centrepiece article in the Daily Telegraph suggested that her willingness to cuddle up to the teaching profession (from which she and her husband sprang) made her big speech that day to the NUT "a bit like Harold Wilson addressing the Durham Miners' Gala".

This was vicious stuff and — politically if not personally — Mrs Shephard would have profited from a lot more teacher hooliganism than in fact confronted her.

It would have been easy enough for her to have provoked it. She needed only to have departed from her text a little and adopted the tone she took later with the journalists to have snapped the self-restraint of her audience. A mention of more grammar schools could have done the trick. Or praise for Chris Woodhead, the chief inspector of schools, who has become a bogeyman for his trenchant criticism of 15,000 "incompetent" teachers. But Mrs Shephard stuck to

her script and left the sharp words until the press conference. The same happened 10 days ago when she made the announcement that there would be a white paper on school admissions policy in a lecture to the good and the great at the Institute of Education in London.

Inside the hall she said the Government would not force any school to become selective, leading many present to believe she might have won her battle with the Prime Minister to maintain the comprehensive principle. But afterwards at the press conference she appeared to have bowed to his ruling that a switch to more grammar schools was desirable and inevitable.

Every state secondary might get the right to select its intake, with the option of forming local 11-plus consortia to pick the most able pupils. This could lead to the creation of a grammar school in every town, she said.

IT WOULD be naive to complain of a politician saying different things to different audiences, but the problem for Mrs Shephard is that the trick is not working for her. Her strongest asset was the support of the educational establishment which appreciated rescue from the wider lunacies of the Patten era, but this is being eroded by the nagging suspicion that she can no longer defend common sense against demands from the Downing Street policy unit for ideological radicalism. Her enemies on the right are not convinced by the television soundbites that she has come over to their side. Mrs Shephard may yet find

the political skills to get out of this mess, although evidently she is constrained by a sense of honour which may be too strong for her own good. We cannot expect her to discover a passion for corporal punishment or other red meat to throw to the party wolves.

She may be the victim, but she is not the fool in this story. John Major appears to be making a huge mistake in believing that he can turn a distinctively rightist education policy into an election winner. All the polling evidence shows Labour continuing to build on a lead of more than 30 per cent in the popular estimation of the party with the best policies in this area.

Last week a Harris poll commissioned by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers confirmed a heavy majority against selective education, backed up by strong sympathy for Barriett Harman, the shadow health secretary, in her decision to abolish the grammar school for her second son. The people are supporting her, but rejecting a return to a system which divides children by ability at 11.

The Prime Minister appears not to have realised that education — like the health service — is an issue which wins votes for Labour. The best a Conservative leader can do is to seek to remove it from the headlines and concentrate on Tory issues such as defence and taxation.

Yet now Michael Heseltine, the deputy Prime Minister, is joining in the rush to draw even more attention to the deficiencies of the education system after 17 years of Conservative government. He wants the worst indicators of comparison with the educational performance of OECD rivals included in his next competitiveness white paper, as a spur to greater effort.

Again Mrs Shephard is pointing out the folly and no doubt again she will be portrayed as ideologically un-sound. David Blunkett, her Labour shadow, must be praying that her advice continues to be discarded.

Advertisement for Staffordshire featuring a castle illustration and text: "SHORT BREAKS WITH LONG MEMORIES. From the exhilaration of Alton Towers, to the beautiful Peak District and from the world famous 'Batteries' to delightful Stately Homes, Gardens and Market Towns, Staffordshire will never cease to amaze you. For your free brochure with discount vouchers, return the coupon or call us now on: 0345 660360 (calls charged at local rate). NAME, ADDRESS, POSTCODE. Please return to: Staffordshire Tourism, P.O. Box 27, Barnetople, EX31 1YW. Ref 40/15

Greer Garson

First lady of the Blitz

IT HAS become unfashionable to express an admiration for Greer Garson, who has died aged 92 — although most reference books make her five years younger. A certain derision regarding one of Hollywood's top 1940s stars is mostly due to the reduction of her career to the image of indomitable, upper middle-class English housewife defying the Blitz in *Mrs Miniver* (1942). Garson, who became emblematic to Americans of the courage of the British under bombardment, tended to invite faintly damning epithets such as "lily-like" "gracious" — with its queenly echoes and "demure". But time has tended to obscure the numerous qualities of Metro's Glorified Mama, as she called herself. Though a patrician beauty, most often poised and graceful, she was also high-spirited, witty, vibrant, independent and intelligent.

By almost all accounts she was born in County Down, although there have been some suggestions that she was an Essex girl. Whichever way, she avoided the ill-liked water Englishness of, say, Anna Neagle, and there was a lovely lilt to her "bird-of-paradise tones and accent", in Parker Tyler's phrase.

After attending London University, Garson intended to become a teacher but joined an advertising company instead, while dabbling in amateur dramatics. In 1932, she made her professional debut in Elmer Rice's *Street Scene*, with the Birmingham Rep, and stayed with the company for two years. In the West End, she was spotted in a melodrama called *Old Music* by MGM chief Louis B. Mayer, who had come expecting a musical. He signed her to a \$500 a week contract, though she sat

around Hollywood for almost a year waiting for a role. She was just about to return to England in defeat when director Sam Wood saw her screen test and decided she would be ideal in *Goodbye Mr Chips* (1939) in the relatively brief role of Mrs Chipping, the wife of the shy and aloof schoolmaster (Robert Donat) who brings out his natural humanity and concern for his pupils.

This led to her role as a delightful, though a little too maudlin, Elizabeth Bennet in *Audrey Huxley's* screen adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* (1940) opposite Laurence Olivier's Mr Darcy. It was an



Garson... called herself Metro's Glorified Mama

important step in Garson's career, and she rapidly became MGM's classiest actress after the departure of Garbo and Norma Shearer.

The successful weepie, *Blossoms in the Dust* (1941), which revealed the star's red hair in Technicolor for the first time, was equally significant for Garson as it was the first of eight films she was to make with Walter Pidgeon. As a loving couple, who establish an orphanage after their own child dies, they become one of Hollywood's ideal romantic couples, rather like a non-singing Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald. While Garson was idealistic and animated, Pidgeon represented the wistful, pipe-smoking, steady virtues. The apotheosis of their relationship was reached in *Mrs Miniver*. Their affectionate interplay is most noticeable in the scene in a shelter when they try to calm their children's fears during a bombing raid.

During the shooting, Garson incurred Louis B. Mayer's displeasure when she began a love affair with her screen son Richard Ney, 10 years her junior. They announced their engagement, but Mayer begged them not to tell the press, and to delay their marriage until after the film's first showing. The couple complied, and they were married in 1943.

Mrs Miniver won Greer Garson her only best actress Oscar (out of seven nominations), for which she delivered the longest acceptance speech in the Academy's history. For almost an hour she thanked everyone under the sun for her success. Garson's long-winded address caused the Academy to ask future winners to limit their speeches to three minutes. When, in 1951, Garson was asked to say "a few words" at the award ceremony, she remarked good-naturedly, "If I have time, I have a few things left over to say..."

In *Random Harvest* (1942), Garson demonstrated that it's not eyes that count. Her eyes tear-laden as she lovingly touches his possessions, had a potent impact on wartime audiences.

The film announced her Queen of Hollywood, and produced various takeoffs including Judy Garland's "A Great Lady Has An Interview" routine from *Ziegfeld Follies* (1946), in which a gloriously affected Judy discusses her role as Madame Crematun, who invented the safety pin. The number was created for Garson, but her husband refused it for her. According to James Agee: "If she were not suffocated and immobilised by Metro's image of her and, I'm afraid, half persuaded of it herself — I could imagine her as a very good Lady Macbeth."

Valley of Decision (1945), in which Garson played Mary



Oscar-winner... Mrs Miniver won her the award, but *Random Harvest*, with Ronald Colman (1942), included her kitted imitation of Harry Lauder

Rafferty, the lively Irish servant girl, who falls for her boss's son (Gregory Peck) even outdid *Mrs Miniver* at the box-office. However, it proved to be the last of her hits, and her charms became less acceptable in the more cynical post-war era. There were attempts to revive her popularity by co-starring her with returning war veteran Clark Gable in *Adventure* (1945) — "Gable's Back and Garson's Got Him" — casting her as Irene Forsythe in *That Forsyte Woman* (1949), and even in a sequel called *The Miniver Story* (1950), which flopped, though Garson and

Pidgeon still produced the same remarkable chemistry. She began to spend more time with her third husband, Texas oil millionaire, Elijah "Buddy" Fogelson at their New Mexico ranch where she bred horses, as well as working for various charities. Her few sorties into showbusiness included her stage role as *Archie Moore* in 1958, a cameo as the Mother Superior in *The Singing Nun* (1966) — surprising she didn't play more nuns — and as Fred McMurray's supportive wife in *The Happiest Millionaire* (1967). However, her one later screen role of substance was that of Eleanor Roosevelt in *Sunrise at Campobello* (1959). Equipped with prosthetic teeth to better simulate Eleanor's looks, and emulating her unique, quavery voice, Garson submerged her own persona to give a beautifully-nuanced and heartfelt performance. It was fitting that the most celebrated of Washington's first ladies should be played by the erstwhile First Lady of Hollywood.

Garson, film actress, born September 29, 1903; died April 6, 1996.

Gordon Clough

Radio's friendly persuader

GORDON Clough who has died aged 61 was that rarity among current affairs journalists — the nice guy who invariably got his man. I never heard him hector an interviewee, yet on Radio 4's *The World At One*, *The World This Weekend* and *PM* he would find the question that pierced the armour-plating, tease out the inconsistencies, reveal the sham.

He made it sound so easy, but, once you worked beside him, you realised that his ability was based on effort — he briefed himself more thoroughly than most, and he had that knack that is always there in the best journalists — that of making connections with facts most of us had long forgotten. Thus armed, he would gently correct those of his interviewees who would deny the evidence of history. They rarely tried it twice.

It was his sense of history and his culture that made Gordon a great journalist. He was modest, but very aware that he had lived through — and played an active role in — a dangerous and exciting period in world affairs. He spoke fluent Russian, learnt by monitoring Soviet naval signals on Royal Navy national service.

And it was in covering events in the Soviet Union that Gordon spent his finest hours. He understood the country and his easy-going, natural conversations with ordinary people made his coverage so enlightening.

No one who heard his interview with an 80-year-old woman in Leningrad, dis-

traught and starving as perestroika bit hard and the rubble plunged, was left in any doubt about the horrors of the events or the humanity of the reporter.

Born in Salford, Gordon was educated at Bolton School and Magdalen College, Oxford where he read French and Russian. He joined the BBC as a studio manager after the navy in 1958, moved to the *World Service* in 1960, *Radio News* features in 1968 and freelanced from 1973.

I spent six months working with Gordon across the dying Soviet Union in 1989 — six months living out of each other's pockets, and only one word between us, so trivial I can't even remember its cause. Others have similar memories: of Gordon, stranded overnight and freezing at minus 40 C in a Siberian airport and still cracking jokes at 4am to keep the

show going, of always, in spite of his growing disability, being able to summon up the extra effort to turn in a better job than anyone else. He had something of a reputation for being a little short with colleagues who were less than on the ball — but tea and cakes at four on a Saturday afternoon would restore his cheer, however downcast he might have become with the *World This Weekend's* news agenda or the team that was producing it.

He won his first Sony Award for his presentation of that programme; fittingly, the second came for his work in the Soviet Union, for a programme on the death of the Aral Sea, which showed Gordon as a great reporter, and consummate writer, and emerged on paper rarely needed more than a cursory tweak, he was a wonderful role model.

It was his broadcasts that made BBC radio's Soviet coverage in the eighties as good as it was. And Gordon Clough was totally dedicated to radio. Some suggested that, because of his small and somewhat shambolic frame, he would never have made it on television.

It was that was TV's loss. He loved radio and was the complete radio man. The power of words was his craft, and he created pictures that left lesser performers gasping. He knew about sound too — and used it to complement and build his images.

As the Latvian national anthem rang out and the flag was raised at an illegal ceremony outside Riga, just one

phrase from Gordon said it all: "There's a single tear, rolling down the cheek of the woman next to me". Others would have embellished; He knew when to stop talking.

The talking has stopped forever now, and that's devastating for all of us who loved Gordon and his radio. He was a dream to work with. There were never embarrassing silences; his experience and knowledge were so broad and deep there was always something to talk about.

Time after time, though, the conversation would return to his passion for Soviet affairs; in even the smallest and most boring village, Gordon would discover something new and interesting. On one occasion, following just such a lead, we strayed beyond where our visas were valid — and ended up under arrest. It could have been a disaster, but the interminable interrogation finally revealed that the militiaman was an avid listener to the BBC Russian Service of which Gordon was once programme organiser. The two were old buddies in moments. As we left, I noticed the report of our infraction being filed in the wastepaper basket.

Gordon made sense of the Soviet Union, because he knew instinctively that what was important was the people. He never completely forgave the Soviet authorities for banning him from the country for so many years while he worked for the Russian Service. But he respected the passing of that infuriating but fascinating country. His marriage to Carolyn Stafford was dissolved in 1991. He leaves a son and three daughters.

Max Easterman

Arthur Gordon Clough, journalist, born August 28, 1934; died April 7, 1996.



Clough justice... sense of history and culture made him great

Herb Hall

A branch of jazz's family tree

HERB Hall, who has died aged 88, was an outstanding jazz clarinetist and saxophonist. He played with Sidney Bechet and Eddie Condon and was the youngest of five Louisiana-born brothers, all of whom became musicians and one of whom, Ed, won international acclaim with Louis Armstrong.

Hall was born in Reserve, a hamlet 45 miles from New Orleans. Although his first instrument was the banjo, he picked up clarinet, inspired by his father and brothers. Based in New Orleans, Herb began to work with the city's established dance orchestras, specialising in alto saxophone.

Albert headquartered in San Antonio and Hall relocated there, continuing to play in nightclubs during the war, after the glory days with Albert were over.

In 1945, Hall made for New York. Concentrating again on



Hall... jazz devotee with a warm-toned lyrical style

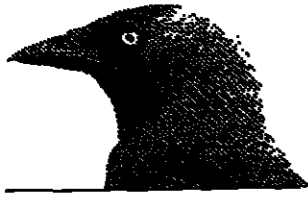
clarinet and sticking to Albert System (as did most of the great New Orleans instrumentalists), he developed a warm-toned lyrical style, in contrast to the hard-driving approach favoured by brother Edmond. Following a three-month tour of Europe in 1958 with pianist Sammy Price, with whose band (plus Sidney Bechet) he made a series of impressive records, Herb joined Eddie Condon, becoming a fixture at the guitarist's club.

He first visited Britain in 1961 (with the English trumpeter Clive Wilson) and returned again with a group recreating Jelly Roll Morton's music, in 1968 with pianist Martin Westwood, appreciating his elegant performances and gentle easy-going personality. By this time, he had given up his small shop on Long Island, worried by the deteriorating neighbourhood, sold his saxophones and returned to Boerne, near San Antonio, a yoga devotee — "It opens the mind and you can think freer," he said. The clean-living Hall cut more fine records in his later years, gaining greater critical acceptance apparently content that his talents were now receiving proper if overdue recognition. He was still playing guest spots with local bands in Texas, where he had settled, until the last few years.

Peter Wacher

Herbert "Herb" Hall, clarinetist and saxophonist, born March 28, 1907; died March 6, 1996.

Jackdaw



Bully for us

NO WONDER the current plight of the British livestock industry has turned into yet another trauma of national identity. The monarchy may have become a soap opera, and the national cricket team a bad joke, but the extinction of the Sunday lunch of Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pudding has tabloid southsayers prophesying the death knell of British culture — or, at least, of the Tory Government, which has been accused of prostration in the face of the impending "beef crisis". The spectre of "mad cow disease" has led the European Union to pro-

hibit the import of British beef, and has produced a near-hysteria in England. To those who assume that national passions are artificially manufactured by cynical politicians, all the rage and anguish stirred up in Britain over the European ban will seem overwrought. But the modern British identity was shaped, in the 18th century, around such emotional national icons as the oak and the bull, and defined, invariably, against the French. To have the four-legged symbol of essential Britishness repudiated by the European Union precisely at the moment when discussions are under way on Britain's federal future is to be reminded in the most painful way of the fit between British insularity and Continental federalism.

Simon Schama explains *Mad Cows and Englishmen* to the readers of *The New Yorker*.

A Web death
WE'RE THROWING in the towel and, in a flurry of clichés, giving up the ghost. The

[Internet] site will remain as a library of short opinion essays to which we'll add from time to time, but the frenetic publishing deadlines are gone.

We've learned a few lessons from this project, which we hope to see mentioned someday in the chapter headed, "Early Web Publishing: The Populist Years". WebRunner's premise was that the World Wide Web was fundamentally a powerful wedge allowing democracy to gain a seat at a table dominated by big-media publishers and broadcasters. That may still happen, but not with the capital-poor model we were forced to choose. (Note to writers to whom we owe money: The checks will be in the mail soon. Truly. Sorry for the delay, and thanks for being patient.) We learned that even on the Web, it takes money to succeed.

It takes money to buy the advertising that lets people know you're there. So much of the Web these days is promoted in traditional media. Check out the ads in *Wired*. It also takes money to pro-

duce a content field rich enough to draw a crowd. What we published was very good, but there was never enough material to consistently keep people streaming into the tent, and our hit rate showed it. Moreover, the World Wide Web is an unattractive medium.

The final editorial from the publishers of the electronic *zine*, *WebRunner*, some of which can still be read on the Internet at <http://www.access.digec.net/web/>

there, when anywhere is reachable from everywhere, it's all nowhere. So the only way one place can stand out from another is through image-making, the big bucks game of advertising to create perceived values in customers' minds. That's a game we can't afford to play.

The final editorial from the publishers of the electronic *zine*, *WebRunner*, some of which can still be read on the Internet at <http://www.access.digec.net/web/>

Doctor, doctor
1. DO NOT Expect Your Doctor To Share Your Discomfort. Involvement with the patient's suffering might cause him to lose valuable scientific objectivity.
2. BE Cheerful At All Times.

In the gallery
IT IS THE dream of my life. We can have exhibitions of furniture, a section of designers that I like, our own collection, our menswear and accessories. It has become a bit like a gallery; it's never boring. I don't think people these days need to buy another tie or another jacket — shopping has become like going to a club. You get so many people who stroll in the shop, meet their friends and arrange to have dinner.

Clothes designer and retail guru Joseph reveals in the sus-



former environment of his Fulham Road shop, in an interview with the top people's magazine, *Harpers & Queen*.

Your doctor leads a busy and trying life and requires all the gentleness and reassurance he can get.

3. TRY TO Suffer From The Disease For Which You Are Being Treated. Remember that your doctor has a professional reputation to uphold.

4. DO NOT Complain If The Treatment Fails To Bring Relief. You must believe that your doctor has achieved a deep insight into the true nature of your illness, which transcends any mere permanent disability you may have experienced.

5. NEVER Ask Your Doctor To Explain What He Is Doing Or Why He Is Doing It. It is presumptuous to assume that such profound matters could be explained in terms that you would understand.

6. SUBMIT To Novel Experimental Treatment Readily. Though the surgery may not benefit you directly, the resulting research paper will surely be of widespread interest.

7. PAY Your Medical Bills Promptly And Willingly. You should consider it a privilege to contribute, however mod-

estly, to the well-being of physicians and other humanitarians.

8. DO NOT Suffer From Allments That You Cannot Afford. It is sheer arrogance to contract illnesses that are beyond your means.

9. NEVER Reveal Any Of The Shortcomings That Have Come To Light In The Course Of Treatment By Your Doctor. The patient-doctor relationship is a privileged one, and you have a sacred duty to protect him from exposure.

10. NEVER Die While In Your Doctor's Presence Or Under His Direct Care. This will only cause him needless inconvenience and embarrassment.

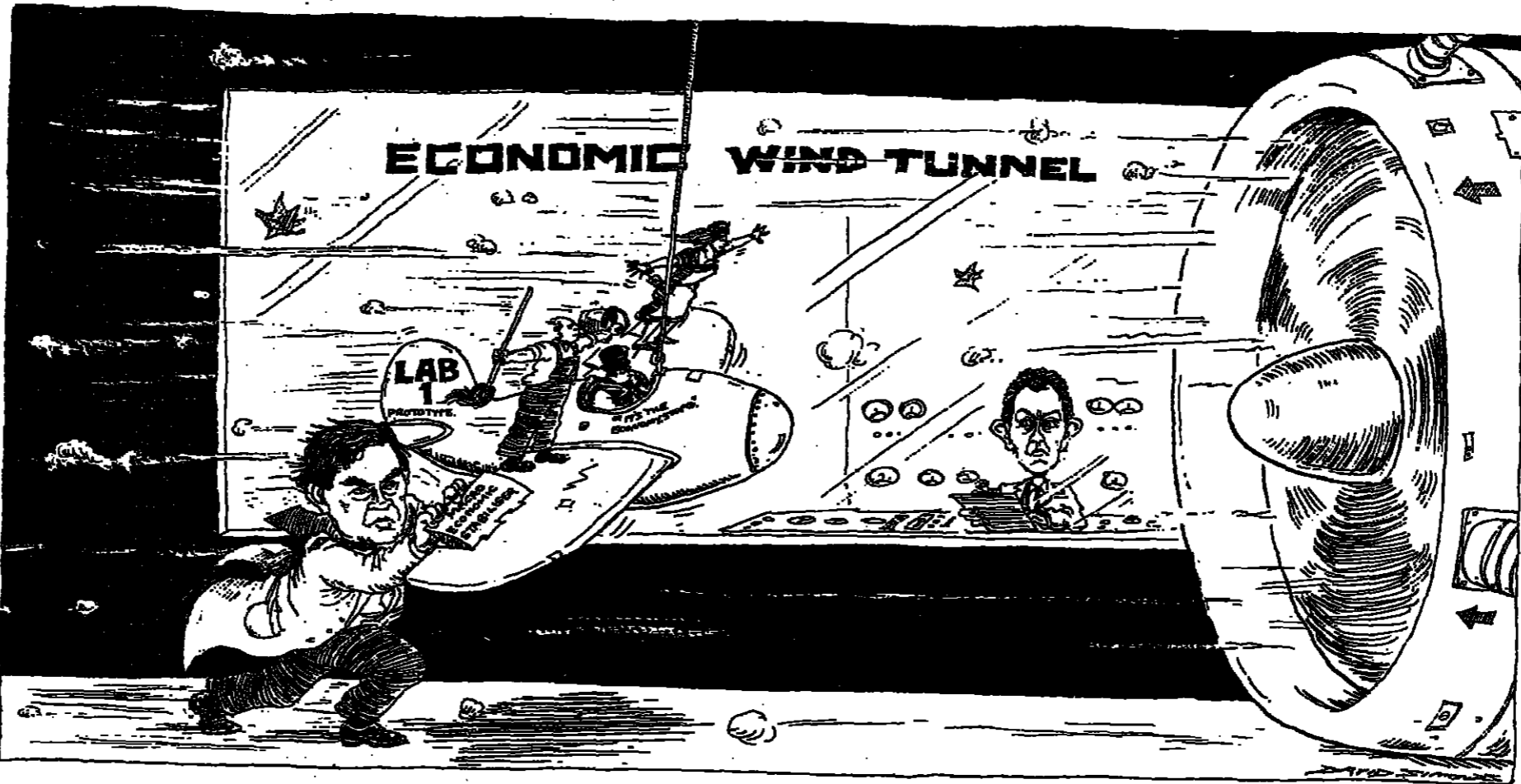
More electronic mail wisdom. From the Code of Ethical Behaviour for Patients.

Jackdaw wants your jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4366; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Dan Glaister

صحة من الامل

'Opposition is not saying that past 17 years show capitalism is fundamentally flawed. Rather, it is staking a claim to manage capitalism better than the Tories'



'Those out of work for long period pay high price. Suicide rates, marital breakdown and effects of poverty on children all soar once the 12-month milestone is passed'

Red Rose Economics Week-long test of Labour policies begins with examination of macro and micro views

Internal truce is fragile in absence of war



Lary Elliott

'We have been through this so many times. Finally the economy is always going to be a Tory issue. Its theirs. They own it. However unfair it is, I wish it weren't so. But it's true.'

Family tree

It is four years since the playwright David Hare penned those words in absence of war, after following Neil Kinnock around the 1992 election trail. For those who covered the 1992 election, David Hare's words have an awful ring of truth about them.

At a time of severe recession, Labour could hardly wait to get off the economy and on to its "strong" areas - health and education.

The first two weeks of the campaign were wasted on tax, Labour's weakest issue; the third week wrangling about Jennifer's ear, and the fourth lost to a muddled debate about constitutional reform.

Within a year the parties will be back on the hustings and this time, we are assured, it will all be different. Like Bill Clinton in 1992, Labour strategists now say "It's the economy, stupid" when asked what will determine victory or defeat.

In one important sense, Labour is better placed than it was four years ago. Black Wednesday saw to that. Even so, Labour has found it hard to shake off the bunker mentality so cruelly portrayed in Absence of War. Its tactics are those of an English club away to strong opponents in the European Cup - get everybody behind the ball, make as few mistakes as possible and try to sneak a goal on the break.

The message seems to have got through to the electorate. On the BBC's Newswatch last week, one of those focus

groups so beloved of politicians found that voters put Labour to the right of the Liberal Democrats and saw Tony Blair as indistinguishable from John Major.

This is hardly surprising. The vast bulk of the Thatcherite revolution - market forces and privatisation - is seen as irreversible. Parts of it - trade union reform, for example - appear to be thought of as beneficial.

Not only has Labour moved unashamedly to the right on economic policy (and everything else), it has also wanted everybody to know it is moving unashamedly to the right. The answer to the murmurs of discontent, and there are plenty of them in the party, is always the same. Britain is a conservative (small c) country where people are wary of change.

If we have to pitch our tents

somewhere to the right of where the SDP was at the time of the Limehouse Declaration in order to defeat the Conservatives, then so be it.

This is a powerful argument, and there are many in the party who accept its depressing logic even while secretly hankering after a more radical approach.

But the softy-softy line has its risks. One is that Labour's sales pitch fails to excite the voters, particularly if the economy does well over the coming months. The Opposition is not saying the past 17 years show that capitalism is fundamentally flawed, nor that the kind of the workers that has had some experience of unemployment in the 1990s while directors' pay has rocketed demonstrates that class still matters. Rather, it is staking a claim to manage

capitalism better than the Tories. Or, as the modern jargon has it, make markets more dynamic.

Labour's strategists argue that this is a perfectly acceptable line of attack. After all, two recessions, an unsustainable boom, the loss of the reserves in macro-economic management's biggest cock-up in more than half a century and the squandering of the North Sea oil windfall suggests that Conservative stewardship has not exactly been unblemished.

However, if Labour is to be a success - even in its own terms - it is still crucial that it get the macro-economy right. In essence, that means making a distinction between the largely successful American approach to macro-economic management and the disastrous French approach.

For the French, stability appears to mean over-valued exchange rates propped up by excessively high interest rates and, as a result, permanent deflation. For the Americans, stability is quite consistent with low interest rates, indifference to exchange rates and a bias towards expansion.

Gordon Brown knows all this. He and his team are close to the Clinton economic policymakers and aware that people like Larry Summers and Robert Reich argue forcefully that necessary structural changes of the sort Labour is proposing only make sense against an expansionary macro-economic background.

A policy conducive to growth really means a loose monetary policy coupled with a restrictive fiscal policy - again, the strategy followed by the Clinton camp. Keeping fiscal policy tight has two ad-

vantages - it prevents expansion being overly dominated by consumption and helps keep long-term interest rates down. (This is not to say, incidentally, that fiscal policy should be set in aspic: there is scope for different spending priorities and changing the taxation regime.)

If this is what Mr Brown means by stability, then he will deserve support. Some of his statements suggest that he is in favour of the sort of controlled expansion that would allow the economy to grow at 3-3.5 per cent for a number of years, a rate which, according to some officials, could eventually bring the jobless total below 1,500,000.

Labour, we are promised, will have a Medium Term Growth Strategy, will reorganise the Treasury to make it a ministry of economics as well as a finance ministry, and in-

troduce a more broadly based monetary policy committee at the Bank of England.

It has to be said, however, that Labour's economic policy sometimes comes across as rather more orthodox and it is often hard to know with which of its two voices the Opposition is speaking. Acting tough in order to convince people that Labour will never again preside over 25 per cent inflation is one thing, trying to outdo the Conservatives in anti-inflation street cred, as Mr Blair attempted in his Maitis lecture, another.

The hard truth is that only if the mix of monetary and fiscal policy is conducive to growth can the second half of Labour's macro-economic plan slot into place. This involves tackling job insecurity through a sustained increase in investment designed to in-

crease the economy's long-term growth rate. Like his friends in Washington, Mr Brown is confident that there is a higher rate for the Government to stimulate an increase in the quantity and quality of investment. So Labour is promising reforms to corporate governance, tax breaks, public-private finance partnerships, a university for industry and so on.

Some economists believe Labour's approach could work. The economic historian Nick Crafts, for example, told a meeting last week organised by the Centre for Economic Policy Research that endogenous growth theories can help raise growth rates, provided governments differentiate between the broad accumulation of capital - the unfocused approach followed by centrally planned economies - and investment based on innovation and the diffusion of new technologies.

Bill Martin, chief economist with Citicorp, is far less sanguine. In a paper on Labour to be released later this month, Mr Martin will argue that the Opposition's proposed reforms are so minimalist that they are likely to have no impact on the long-term growth rate of growth. Nor does his research show any link between macro-economic stability and higher growth, except at rocketing levels of inflation.

Labour is sensitive to this charge of minimalism, partly because it is what some of the more radical left-wing critics say, partly because it has some truth in it. Despite all the talk of radicalism, the policy stance is cautious: hence the dilution of the proposals on training to omit any reference to a mandatory levy and the lack of desire to talk about when and at what level a minimum wage would be introduced.

For the time being, party unity is unlikely to crack. Those who think the emphasis on macro-economic caution coupled with incremental changes on the supply side amount to Conservatism by any other name are keeping their powder dry. But money wars have a nasty habit of turning into the real thing.

Wage subsidies can help to stop the rot in giroland

Richard Thomas

MR DAVIES is the sort of person for whom New Labour has reserved its most interventionist economic policy. After more than two years on the dole, he has just landed a job as a labourer at SDB Kitchens in Waverton, Cheshire - but not without the state help Labour wants to expand radically.

The Government put him forward for the post, boned his interview technique, then agreed to pay a chunk of his salary.

Mr Davies is fortunate to be living in one of three areas where the Government is piloting its WorkStart programme, in which people who have been unemployed for more than two years receive a wage subsidy.

Without this, Mr Davies is convinced he would still be in giroland. "I'd sent off thousands of applications," he says. "But it just gets harder and harder. They

end up not even bothering to reply."

His boss gets the minimum subsidy of £58 a month. For those who have been claiming benefit for 10 years, the subsidy rises to over £200. Labour, which places wage subsidies at the heart of its "welfare-to-work" strategy, has bolder plans. Any firm taking on someone who has been on the dole for more than two years will get a £75 subsidy every week for six months. Under Labour, Mr Davies, who earns £3 an hour, would come half-price.

The rationale for this scale of micro-economic intervention is two-fold. First, those who remain out of work for a long period pay a high price in terms of social exclusion. Suicide rates, marital breakdown and the effects of poverty on children all soar once the 12-month milestone is passed. Three months out of work is inconvenient; three years is a disaster.

The other argument is a bit harder-headed: unlike

the short-term jobs, they are not carrying out their national duty of restraining inflation.

As new skills become eroded and work habits are lost as time passes, employers look askance at people with long periods of unemployment on their CVs. They don't compete in the labour market.

Doreen King, WorkStart co-ordinator for the North-west pilot area, agrees that a vicious circle sets in. "They can't afford a phone, car, or even clothes - bless them - on the pittance they have to live on. We have to stop the rot setting in."

By stopping the rot, Labour argues, wage subsidies would allow the economy to grow faster without triggering price pressures. And because the subsidies take the place of benefits already being paid, it pays for itself, too. Everyone wins.

Stephen de Blasio, Mr Davies's employer, supports moves to make the scheme more generous. "If there was more money, it would be more attractive," he

says. "At the moment, people aren't better off in work. The Government should use more of that money to subsidise them out of work."

But things are never as rosy as they seem. Wage subsidies have a number of problems. Lots of the people hired on the cheap would have found work anyway - "deadweight" in the economists' parlance. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which looks kindly on this sort of active labour market policy, reckons that up to half of the cost could be deadweight.

PETER Brinkman, a barman at a local recreation centre under the WorkStart programme, probably falls into this category. Tony Brown, chairman of the centre's committee, says: "He is the sort of person we would have taken on anyway. If a vacancy came along, we'd definitely have hired him."

Proponents of subsidies, including Professor Dennis

Snowden, point out that even if half of the subsidised people represent deadweight cost, the other half will not have otherwise found a job. The glass is half-full, not half-empty.

A second danger of subsidies is that unscrupulous employers might use the cheap labour to replace existing staff. The Labour Party reckons this problem of "displacement" could be tackled by rigorous monitoring. But, once the scheme is established nationwide and firms sussed it out, it seems inevitable that some existing employees would be losers.

Of course, the firms currently benefiting from the pilot scheme are horrified at this suggestion. Mr de Blasio says: "I wouldn't subject myself to those sorts of tactics."

Mr Brown, a currently unemployed at the recreation centre admits it could happen. Just not there. "You could just throw them back out. We just don't work that way. We go from the heart, not the head."

FA and opera house share worthy goal

Briefing Sarah Ryle

YOU can have too much of anything. Easter eggs at Easter. Turkey for Christmas. Beef, for some, just about always. It is a pretty safe bet that, whatever discounts shops offer on chocolate eggs over the next few days, there will still be a surplus at the end of this week.

There are times when the usual rules of supply and demand break down because factors outside producers' control become more influential.

Beef is a good example. Although some consumers will be tempted to buy beef as prices plummet in the face of the BSE scare, many will choose not to run the unquantifiable risk posed by a shepherd's pie. Demand is likely to become increasingly inelastic.

But at least by responding to the scare with lower prices, producers and retailers are making an effort to maintain the traditional British roast.

Recent events in the field of another British obsession, football, showed a total failure to appreciate basic supply-and-demand principles in

the highest echelons of the sport. The Football Association came under fire for somehow failing to sell out one of the highlights of the soccer calendar, the semi-final between two of Britain's most passionately followed and on-form clubs. The game between Liverpool and Aston Villa should have been played in front of a capacity crowd. It was held at Old Trafford, the home ground of Manchester United and a modern, high-class stadium. It was within easy travelling distance of both visiting teams' fans.

Granted, it was on Sky televi-

sion, but any football supporter will tell you that watching the match on TV is not as good as being there.

So why was the ground only 80 per cent full? Liverpool returned 6,000 of their 23,500 tickets unsold and Aston Villa returned 4,400 of their 23,004. The FA imposed a pricing structure at Old Trafford which took the average weighted price to £31.68. Almost all of the Old Trafford returns were tickets priced at the top level of £38.

But at Villa Park, the venue of the other semi-final played on the same day and televised by the BBC, Chelsea sold all of their 18,500 allocation while Manchester United sold all but 700 of their 19,000. The 700 outstanding were all priced at £38.

The key differences seemed to be that the smarter Old Trafford ground had 89 per cent of its seats priced at £38, while Villa Park mustered 67 per cent of the better-appointed pews. The market almost cleared at Villa Park but by the accident of its seating status rather than by the design of the FA.

Perhaps the FA could have learned a lesson from the Royal Opera House, an organisation which has become used to allegations of unjustifiable prices.

On closer inspection, the allegations seem to be a little harsh. The Opera House has a pricing system with 131 levels. The range depends on the performance. Thus, for Wagner's The Ring, which corporate affairs director Keith Cooper compared with an FA Cup semi-final as opposed to a Domingo concert which would be the final itself, the average price was £76 with the range starting at under £50 (800 of the 2,000 tickets) and rising to £140 (for 12% of the total). Result: full house. But for a recent performance of three modern ballets, the average ticket price was £17.80 with a range of £2

to £34, and 800 of the seats available priced at £13.50 or less. Result: also full house.

The comparison, like most, is flawed because the Royal Opera House's supply curve goes vertical at 2,000 tickets whereas Old Trafford's has to reach almost 25 times that before no more seats are available. There are other factors to consider, such as popular appeal and income. Is opera's popularity as widespread as football's, and does most football fans enjoy the same earnings as opera devotees?

The logical step, economically speaking, would be for football and opera organisers to test the elasticity of demand until they discovered the price equilibrium.

Fortunately, football and opera have elected to consider social and moral factors. Illogical, but commendable.

Converging battle lines

Worm's eye Dan Atkinson

BAFFLED and bewildered by the prospect of having to vote on the single currency? Bone up now on the big issues with our EMU Instant Euridition Guide!

This is a decision we may never have to take: Because it will be taken for us.

Nobody said meeting the convergence criteria would be easy. But you won't really miss all those hospitals, honest?

The lessons of the ERM experience have been learned: We won't let the Danes vote this time.

It is all a question of balancing the pros and cons of the argument. And then joining.

On the one hand, the single currency will bring undoubted benefits: For bankers, multi-millionaires and big business.

On the other hand, there will be a downside: For everybody else.

Essentially, it is a technical matter: So belt up and do what you're told.

There will have to be additional compensation to the poorer regions: Huge hand-outs for Spain and Portugal.

As well as for those on the European periphery: And for Ireland and Greece.

But Europe is about solidarity or it is nothing: So let's screw the British fishing fleet.

It is, above all, a vision of fraternity: And the British beef industry.

What Europe needs is a currency that everybody can trust to hold its value: The Swiss franc.

There is no question of EMU proceeding before there has been the widest possible consultation. It will proceed incrementally afterwards.

But EMU will lead to the creation of millions of new jobs: In the United States.

And to a strengthening of society in general: As witnessed in France.

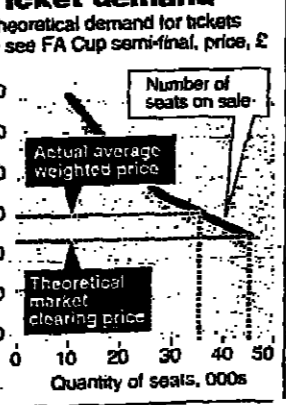
A single currency would leave Parliament with wide discretion in economic policy. Discretion over car-park charges, dinner-money contributions, a penny rate.

Important financial matters will remain with our own MPs: Such as Parliamentary pay rises, allowances, bribes, consultancy pay-offs...

Abandonment of a single currency will lead to war (German chancellor): Winter for Poland and France.

There can be no slowing down for the British (more German chancellor): My patience is at an end.

EMU will mark a step-change in European democracy: By handing the economy over to central bankers. There may have to be penalties for countries remaining outside the single currency: Penalties enforced by the single European army. Competitive devaluation would be a hostile act: It's war.



Indicators

TOMORROW - UKI Industrial production (Feb). JPs Trade balance (BoP) (Feb). UKI Manufacturing output (Feb). UKI Independent panel releases Economic Report. JPs Private sector machinery orders (Feb). WEDNESDAY - UKI CPI Survey of Distributive Trades (Mar). UKI Unemployment rate (Mar).

JPs Current account (BoP) (Feb). JPs Trade balance (BoP) (Feb). Ffs Consumer confidence (Insee) (Mar). THURSDAY - US PPI (Mar). US Retail sales (Mar). QER CPI final (Mar). FRIDAY - US CPI (Mar). US Business inventories (Feb). Source: DKB International.

Tourist rates - bank sells

Australia 1.8950	France 7.4625	Italy 2.353	Singapore 2.06
Austria 15.27	Germany 2.1975	Malta 0.5375	South Africa 6.03
Belgium 44.87	Greece 359.00	Netherlands 2.45	Spain 183.00
Canada 2.02	Hong Kong 11.80	New Zealand 2.17	Sweden 9.99
Cyprus 0.0975	India 82.10	Norway 9.53	Switzerland 1.7530
Denmark 6.49	Ireland 0.9425	Portugal 226.80	Turkey 98.9000
Finland 7.00	Israel 4.78	Saudi Arabia 5.69	US \$ 1.00

Supplied by Reuters Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqel) as at close of business on 7 Feb

Rowing

Carver enjoys absent victory

Christopher Dodd sees Boat Race consolation for the Cambridge president

IF John Snagge was watching from the studio in the sky he would have seen the kind of Boat Race commentators pray for...

It was the Light Blues' fourth successive win and brought the score to 73-68, with one dead-heat. Their time of 16min 58sec equalled the second fastest ever.

Cambridge's lofty men in the middle - Seb Dawson-Bowling and the American Ethan Ayer, described by the coach Robin Williams as "a statement of faith" because at 6ft 9in he had problems fitting into the stroke - contained themselves while maintaining a smooth link between the units in the bow and stern. Much store was set on



Brought to earth... the Oxford stroke Adam Frost, a Cordon Bleu, tastes defeat after six months' build-up and a battle royal from Putney TOM JEWONS

this race by two families and two coaching teams. Rob Clegg, Oxford's president, hoped to repeat his father Duncan's victory 30 years ago and Cambridge's president John Carver wanted to follow in the footsteps of his father Rus-

sell, who won in 1956. The faces in the Oxford launches were a painful sight. Carver, who was dejected at the start of the season after two operations failed to mend his wrist, won the toss and chose the

Surrey station. Afterwards he praised the coaches: Williams for maintaining a superb system of physical and technical training started by the late Mark Lees eight years ago, and the New Zealander Harry Mahon who added the finishing

touches. Williams has now completed two years of his three-year contract and Oxford's Penny Clutter and Daniel Topolski are at the same stage of their contract to turn round Oxford's fortunes. They certainly came close on Saturday.

Both crews compete against Harvard and Yale on the Olympic course near Atlanta on Saturday. Earlier Goldie, the Cambridge reserves, showed the health of the system by beating Isis by 11 lengths in a record time of 17min 2sec.

Cricket

Illingworth to retain full powers

Mike Selvey

RAYMOND Illingworth is to be given assurances from the Test and County Cricket Board that his authority as chairman of selectors will be left untrammelled...

The position of Illingworth has already been undermined by an abortive attempt by some counties, notably Warwickshire, to have him replaced as chairman, and clearly he regards the nomination of eight candidates - in particular Ian Botham and David Graveney - for the two posts not so much as a democratic exercise but as further evidence of a plot to limit his powers.

Reports have suggested that, in the absence of confirmation from Lord's that he will retain his overall right to rule on disputes, Illingworth would consider resigning if anyone other than his preferred candidates - believed to be Brian Bolus and John Edrich - now that a discredited Fred Titmus has withdrawn - is appointed.

But yesterday Alan Smith, the chief executive of the TCCB, said: "The terms and conditions of the appointment of selectors haven't changed and Raymond's role is exactly as it was in 1984, when his terms of reference were very clearly defined, although last year he was manager as well. He will retain a casting vote and a power of veto."

It is the worst-case scenario that bothers Illingworth most: the election of both Botham, who despite his more recent pronouncements that he could "see no problem working with Ily" has not waived in his criticism of the chairman, and Graveney, the man pushed forward by Warwickshire as a would-be chairman. Although there is no reason to believe that team selections would be radically different, Illingworth is intensely suspicious of conspiracy and his confidence has not been enhanced by the ap-

pointment of David Lloyd as England coach.

The captain Mike Atherton's relationship with Lloyd is a good deal closer than the one he has enjoyed with Illingworth; the chairman will be keen to receive the reassurance that he is to make the final decisions.

Although the Afcfield committee is likely to make recommendations about the procedure for appointing future selectors, there is little that Illingworth can do about the process for this year.

He believes that the chairman should be allowed to choose his own accomplices, and until this year's extraordinary upsurge in interest, fuelled inevitably by Botham, appointments generally warrant scant comment.

Illingworth, however, still maintains that selectors should watch a minimum of 50 days' cricket in a season and that there should be no conflict of interest with media work, as would almost certainly be the case with Botham.

Last week Smith circulated a letter to the counties pointing out the inadvisability of appointing someone who works in the media to a selectorial position. Yesterday, however, he denied that the letter was anything other than a straightforward outline of a long-standing policy.

There was nothing sinister involved, he said. "The policy that no one with a significant or full-time interest in the media should be a selector has been in place for 45 years now, and Raymond had to give up his media work when he was appointed, as did Ted Dexter before him. It seems common sense that there should not be this conflict of interest."

But the letter goes on to say that the counties are still at liberty to nominate whomever they wish. "Raymond wants selectors who will watch a lot of cricket but he knows perfectly well that this is a democracy and the counties will elect the candidates they regard as most suitable. It is our job to make sure that whoever gets voted in, it can and will work."

Rugby Union

Courage League One: Bath 41, Harlequins 15

Bath turn on hot tap as cash pool is low

Robert Armstrong

AS Bath stride towards a sixth title it is far from clear where the money is coming from to pay their players in the professional era. Bath's director of rugby John Hall believes he will keep his senior squad together, with the possible exception of Ben Clarke, but said he was getting "more pessimistic" about the prospects of agreement between the top clubs and Twickenham over the future of the domestic game.

New television money is essential to Bath's plans to pay players between £15,000 and £50,000. However, the chances of Bath or indeed any club raising the £1 million plus needed for next season

look increasingly remote as the stalemate with the Rugby Football Union continues.

"It's very frustrating for the clubs, who have taken part in a lot of meetings," said Hall. "The RFU have said they want to negotiate but it seems a certain Mr (Cliff) Brittle is obstructive to our cause. Time is getting short. These matters need to be resolved within the next two weeks."

Hall also wants Clarke "to make a decision quickly" about any move to Richmond, who this week are expected to announce the signing of the Welsh international half-backs Adrian Davies and Andy Moore. Clarke has been offered a long-term contract by Richmond which, together with his England earnings, would guarantee an income of around £125,000 a year.

Though Bath have received a flow of inquiries from potential investors since deciding to reconstitute the club as a limited company controlled by trustees, Hall does not at present have the money to insist on an early decision from any player. No doubt Clarke will keep his options open for at least a month or so, aware that Bath can offer him European Cup rugby next season.

Bath are richly endowed with No. 8s good enough to ease the pain of Clarke's possible exit. Rival clubs are eager to sign the Scotland international Eric Peters, who covered Clarke's absence on Saturday with panache and commitment. Steve Ojomoh, too, has the versatility to fill any back-row position as he proved with a storming display on the blind side.

It is hard to see why Harlequins are eager to sign the Garryowen and Ireland hooker Keith Wood, given the form of Simon Mitchell who, since taking over from Brian Moore, has displayed all the attributes of a modern mobile ball-handling forward. Mitchell and his props Leonard and Mullins played a dynamic part in Quins' remarkable first-half performance which produced a 16-9 interval lead.

Quins' director of rugby Dick Best makes no bones about the need for entertainment, a word he was not afraid to use even in the context of a top-of-the-table clash. Harlequins could take pride in the way they scored two tries, by their half-backs Kitchen and Challinor, in the opening 15 minutes.

Such was the quality of

handling and movement by forwards and backs that it was impossible to take one's eyes off the action. After the break Bath exercised an iron forward grip which yielded them 32 points without reply, including three tries and two audacious drop goals by the half-backs Catt and Nicol.

"Bath highlighted all our weaknesses," said Best. "But we set our stall out to play expansive rugby, scored some good tries and I was very pleased with our never-say-die attitude." Bath's goalkicker Jon Callard, who finished with 20 points, gave the leaders vital insurance while they were struggling to move into a higher gear. The full-back's penalties whittled away Quins' early 12-3 lead so that the hosts levelled the scores

15-15 after 54 minutes and his covering also helped draw the opposition's sting.

Sleight-of-hand's 55th-minute try reflected Bath's collective firepower as the ball went through five pairs of hands before he touched down. Then Quins kept Bath at bay until the last eight minutes when De Glanville and Guscott scored. As Best said: "Bath were brutally effective."

SCORERS: Bath: Try: Sleight-of-hand, De Glanville, Guscott. Conversion: Callard. Penalties: Callard 5. Drop goals: Catt, Nicol. Harlequins: Try: Kitchen, Challinor. Conversion: Challinor. Penalties: Challinor. Bath: J Callard, A Adebayo, P De Glanville (capt), J Guscott, J Sleight-of-hand, M Catt, A Nicol, K Yates, S Owen, J Powell, M Wood, A Fleming, A Roberts, S Ojomoh, E Peters. Harlequins: J Staples, D O'Leary, P Marshall, M Greenwell, A Williams, P Challinor (C), Wright, Bennett, R Kitchen, J Lawrence (capt), S Mitchell, A Mullins, A Snow, R Wetherby, G Ashton (C), Sweeney, K J Jenkins, M Watson. Referee: J Pearson (Durham).

Leicester 15, Wasps 12

Tigers' double-vision intact despite rising rate of attrition

Ian Mallin

ACONCUSSED Niall Malone, staggering from the field - "doing his best Bambi impression" in the words of Leicester's coach Ian Smith - summed up this match. Here were two heavyweights slugging it out toe to toe.

Leicester eventually got the verdict on points, John Liley converting four penalties from four attempts, but it was a grim, attritional affair. Wasps, a place in Europe on their minds, played the part of dark destroyers. Lawrence Dallaglio led by example, tackling with ferocious commitment but rarely did Wasps allow themselves the luxury of giving their backs a run.

"We can't take a great deal of pleasure from that," said Smith. "They won some good line-out ball and stifled our moves but we should have scored three tries."

Leicester at least tried to expand their game but, when Malone was replaced just before the break, Liley was forced to play at fly-half with Underwood moving to full-back. Lacking fluency in midfield, they spluttered to a 12th league win. But they were mightily relieved when Guy

Gregory's last-minute drop-goal attempt drifted wide. This win began a schedule of seven matches in a month for the Tigers, culminating in the cup final against Bath. The game against a World XV at Twickenham next Sunday week is a distraction they could do without.

Their jaded-looking side also seemed distracted by the Tony Russ affair. The club are not commenting on last month's sacking of their director of rugby while a pay-off is negotiated between solicitors, but Russ's first statement yesterday that the decision was "totally flawed legally" is ominous. Many of the players are unhappy with the manner of his departure.

"I'm shocked it has come when it has," said Neil Back. "Despite Leicester's problems and Bath's exhilarating recent form, a cup and league double is still in the offing."

SCORERS: Leicester: Drop goals: Malone. Penalties: Liley 4. Wasps: Drop goals: Gregory 2. Penalties: Gregory 2. Leicester: J Liley, S Hoggson, J O'Connell, R Robinson, R Underwood (capt), N Macken, M Hamilton, S Brown, A Karolsson, G Rowntree, P Clack, D Gardner, M Johnson, M Focle, J Wells, N Rank, W Johnson, W Mason, J Utton, L Scrase, N Greenwood, A James, S Rieker, G Gregory, A Gonsky, M Mellor, K Dunn, J Thomson, M Greenwood, R Kinsey, M White, L Dallaglio (capt), P Sweeney. Referee: S Campbell (Worcester).

Gloucester 18 Bristol 14

Horror show makes for a TV turn-off

Chris Hewett

AROUND 30,000 viewers tune into Sky TV's weekly live rugby broadcast. If Rupert Murdoch was among them for the transmission from Kingsholm, the Courage League may soon be looking for an alternative backer.

Gloucester and Bristol were staggeringly inept. Basic skills were conspicuously absent. "I didn't think it was going to be quite that bad," admitted Gloucester's coach Richard Hill.

If anything, Bristol deserved to sneak the points badly needed by both sides. They scored the only try, smartly finished off in the left corner by Gavin Sharp after some quick thinking from the combative Bracken, and their pack performed better than expected after the late withdrawals of the England tight forwards, Regan and Archer.

As so often, however, lack of discipline cost Bristol dear. But their outgoing coach Brian Hanlon protested: "There was a 15-8 penalty count against us and the play-



Hill... disbelieving

ers were incredulous at times."

The lead changed seven times, the rival goalkickers Fenwick and Thomas taking centre-stage for the first 50 minutes. It was only when Fenwick turned an ankle in a heavy tackle from Bristol's aggressive right-wing Breeze that the match swung decisively towards Gloucester.

Mapletoft was the replacement and promptly smacked over two penalties from near halfway to tie things up. In such a depressing encounter those kicks shone like beacons.

SCORERS: Gloucester: Penalties: Fenwick, Mapletoft 2. Drop goals: Kinser, Birtles, Try: G Sharp. Penalties: Thomas 3. Gloucester: G Fenwick (M Mapletoft, 45min), M Palmer, D Cunningham, M Roberts, N Hoggson, R Hoggson, G Rowntree, A Deacon, R Fisher (C), Gibson, N D Sims (capt), P Glavette, A Simey, C Rowntree. Bristol: P Hill (capt), S Brown, S Martin, K Mason, D Sharp, A Thomas, W Bracken, A Sharp, A Lawrence, D Hinkins, M Corry, M Fontaine, S Holt, J Pearson, C Barrow, R Edwards, S Gray (Forbes).

Welsh Lge: Pontypridd 54, Swansea 22

Jenkins sparks Pontypridd towards Neath two-header

David Plummer

PONTYPRIDD and Neath could find themselves playing each other twice in 10 days next month to settle the destiny of Wales's two major competitions. They have avoided each other in this Saturday's Swansea Cup semi-finals and have started to break away from the pack in the race for the league title.

Pontypridd trail Neath by six points but have a game in hand. Their duel at The Gnoil has been rearranged for May 14, which is 10 days after the cup final.

Even if sides get hammered they can still pick up a bonus point or three by running in consolation tries, so Pontypridd have had to rethink their game. They still roll mauls, but not to the point where Neil Jenkins is in penalty-goal range. They still like to wear opponents down, but not to the point that they open out only with a few minutes to go. As they showed in scoring seven tries against Swansea, their rugby is no longer risk-free but Jenkins is blossoming as an attacking force.

Swansea, who conceded 50 points for the second time this season, have been badly

affected by injuries, yet on a fine day it was surprising to see them employ the forward tactics favoured by Pontypridd in the 1970s. They spoiled for large periods, so the game was not a free-flowing spectacle, yet after 26 minutes the result was never in doubt.

Pontypridd at that point had moved 21-3 ahead with their second try, a counter-attacking game finished off by the wing Geraint Lewis, who was to score twice more.

The quest of both sides for bonus points kept a tension of sorts in the match. Pontypridd, who had already scored their third and final one through Lewis until injury-time but with tries becoming easier to score, their worth is being devalued. As Wales found out this season, defence matters as much as attack.

SCORERS: Pontypridd: Try: G Lewis 3. Collins, J Lewis, Jenkins, Cornack. Conversion: Jenkins 3. Penalties: Jenkins 3. Swansea: Try: Robby, Shaw, Charles. Conversion: Williams 2. Penalties: Williams.

Pontypridd: G Jones, D Manley, J Lewis, S Lewis (C), Cornack, Smith, G Lewis, N Johns, Paul John, N Besser (capt), Phil Jones, M Eymon, G Prosser, M Rowley, M Sallier, D Mcintosh (M Lloyd, 78), R Collins. Swansea: S Jones, A Harris, R Boddy, H Thomas, Simon Davies, A Williams, Rhodri Jones, M Colclough, G Jenkins, R Shaw, M Evans, P Arnold, R Appleby (C), Charles, 10, Stuart Davies (capt), D Thomas. Referee: D R Davies (Llantrisant).

Squash

Martin makes it four

Richard Jago in Cardiff

MICHELLE MARTIN advanced her case to be considered one of the all-time greats of the women's game by taking her fourth successive title at the British Open here yesterday. Yet this victory over her Australian compatriot Sarah Fitz-Gerald was by far the hardest of them.

The score was 1-9, 9-5, 9-1, 9-7 but Martin struggled after leading 8-3 in the fourth, missing the first of five match points with a forehand volley she hit down. "You try to forget things like that but they tend to drift into your mind afterwards," she admitted.

Spurred by that reprieve, Fitz-Gerald, in her first final, redoubled her efforts, hitting the ball 50 per cent harder, but at 7-8 she missed a crucial chance to go to 8-8.

After pulling Martin from side to side in the longest and fiercest rally of the match, she finished with a backhand boast that fudged from the side wall to the top of the tin. Devastated, Fitz-Gerald tossed down her racket, kicked it with uncharacteristic petulance and broke it. The new racket carried her

vinda de Silva was his natural successor.

Ranatunga made his announcement after Sri Lanka lost to Pakistan by 43 runs in the Singer Cup in Singapore. Sanath Jayasuriya struck the fastest half-century in international cricket from 17 balls.

Advertisement for American Football. English Turf. Call 0500 35 35 35 for tickets. Tickets from £7.50. So much for hitting the Scottish where it hurts most. London Monarchs v Scottish Claymores.

Advertisement for London Monarchs. Call 0500 35 35 35 for tickets. Tickets from £7.50. So much for hitting the Scottish where it hurts most. London Monarchs v Scottish Claymores.

At Liberty in-form

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At Liberty can score for in-form Hannon stable

Chris Hawkins

CYNICS will no doubt say that Easter Bank Holiday racing was invented by bookmakers who know a good thing when they see one and have never been known to exploiting the poor old punter. Nearer the truth is that racemasters see the holiday as an opportunity to pack 'em in and 16 meetings today testify to that.

With so much racing, backers find themselves overwhelmed by choice but their capacity to absorb punishment and come back for more has long been the foundation of the betting industry.

After a nightmarish Cheltenham, a dreadful Doncaster and an anguished Aintree, the punters had to concede another round at Kempton on Saturday, although Frankie Dettori's Haydock four-timer did something to restore the balance.

Things do not look much easier at Kempton this afternoon when the Westminster Taxi Insurance Rosebery Handicap is the centrepiece of an eight race card.

Following a stable in form gives you half a chance and Richard Hannon's At Liberty (3.40) looks decent value today. Dane O'Neill, an outstanding apprentice, who won the Lincoln for Hannon on the 33-1 shot Stone Ridge, takes the ride on At Liberty, a colt whose best effort last season was a close fourth in the King George V Handicap at Royal Ascot.

He seemed well suited by the mile and a half then and he should certainly be finishing over this afternoon's shorter trip.

On the Royal Ascot form, Special Dawn won the Rosebery first time out last year and must be on the short list, but John Dunlop's horses have been running as if they need a week or two more.

This is not so with Peter Chappell-Royds, who has hit form straightaway, and he could land a double today with Regal Archive (2.10) and Orinoco River (2.40).

The former makes his debut in the first division of

the Stark Maiden Stakes over seven furlongs and is thought to be well above average.

Only six go to post for the Quail Conditions Stakes, providing The Puzzler (3.10) with a good chance to recapture his smart Irish form of a couple of seasons ago.

Once with Michael Kauntze, he is now trained by Barry Hills and should still still had ability when finishing runner-up to Fire Dome at Doncaster recently with hard To Figure (now 4lb worse off) six lengths behind.

Captain Horatius attempts to win the Magnolia Stakes for the second year running although the presence of his stable-companion, Medaille Militaire, complicates matters.

In these circumstances it may be best to ignore them both and plump for the form horse Wjara (4.25), second to First Island at Doncaster in a decent time on the opening day of the season.

At Newcastle one of the best bets should be Atheryn (4.25) trained by Jeff Pearce, the former jump jockey, who produced Prospector's Cove to win at Kempton on Saturday.

Atheryn has Comic's Future to beat but his two promising runs in good class juvenile events at Newmarket last autumn suggest he is useful and he will certainly relish this mile and a half.

In the Jameson Irish Grand National at Fairyhouse, Flashing Steel will be attempting a notable double.

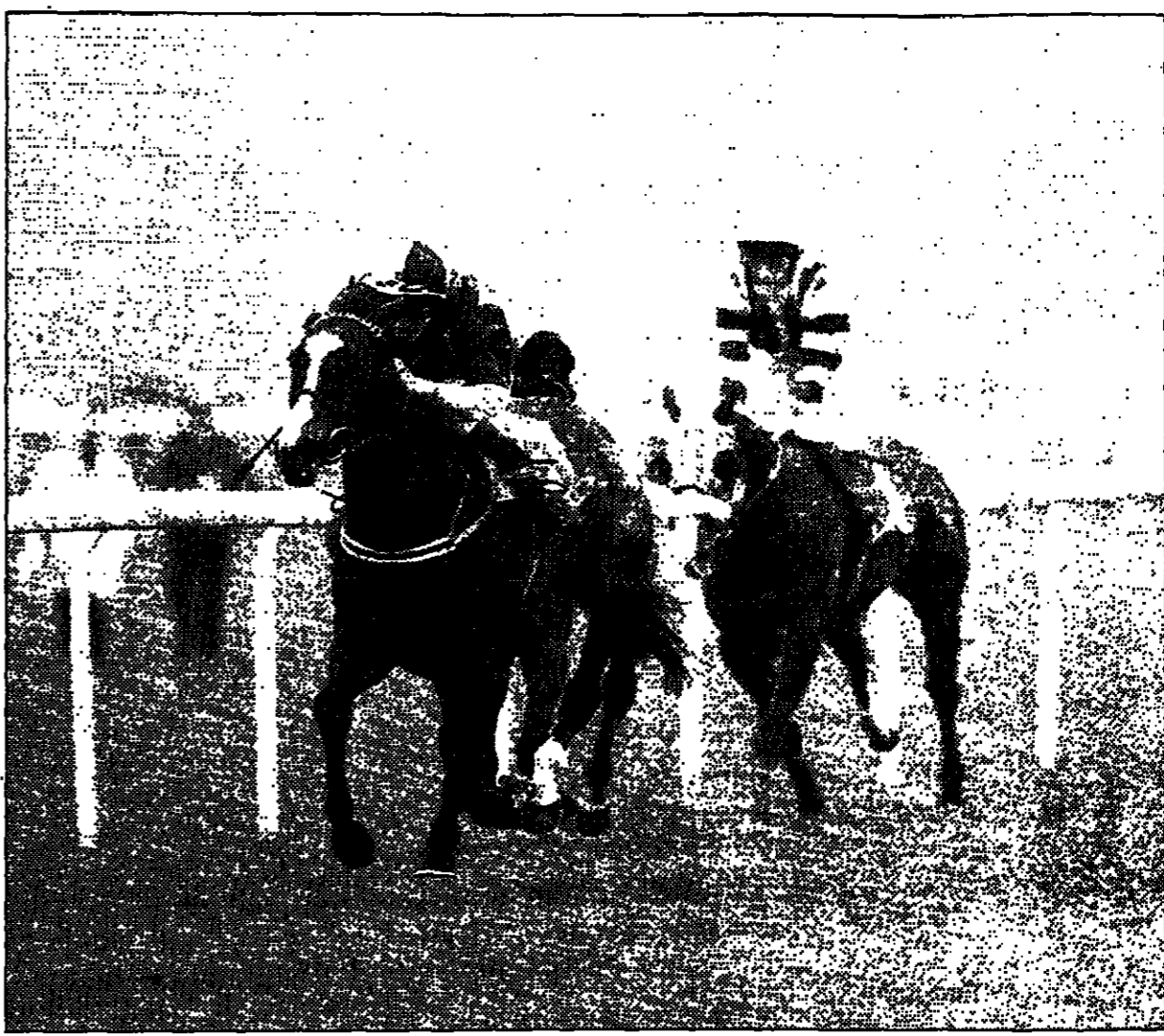
He ran on gallantly under 12 stone to peg back the ill-fated Rust Never Sleeps last year and has been laid out for the race again.

Jodami, Cool Dawn and the Queen Mother's Northern Conqueror are the British challengers.

Norman Conqueror seems better than ever at 11 years of age but the same cannot be said of Jodami, plagued with a succession of ailments and injuries.

The ground is in favour of Jodami, who travels well on the bit these days but does not find much of it.

My preference is for the improving Go Go Gallant (3.55), trained by Cheltenham Gold Cup hero Fergie Sutherland. Charlie Swan, the Irish champion, rides this sound jumper at the bottom of the handicap.



One for the bookies... Wannaplantree lands a 25-1 shock in Saturday's Queen's Prize at Kempton PHOTO: GEORGE SELWYN

Kempton runners and riders

1.40 Magnificent Style	3.40 At Liberty (nb)
2.10 Royal Archive	4.15 Atheryn
2.40 Orinoco River	4.45 Starlet
5.10 THE PUZZLER (cap)	5.15 Civil Liberty

1.40 CITY INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIES MAIDEN STAKES (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

101	2- ABERNETHY (17) C (Urban 9-0)	J Doyle 8
102	0- GARDNER (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
103	2- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
104	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
105	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
106	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
107	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
108	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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114	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
115	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11

2.10 STARK MAIDEN STAKES (5) 7YO 7f 12.142

201	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
202	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
203	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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217	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11

2.40 CITY INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIES MAIDEN STAKES (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

301	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
302	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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314	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11

3.40 WESTMINSTER TAXI INSURANCE ROSEBERY HANDICAP (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

401	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
402	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
403	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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414	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
415	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11

4.15 BARNET STAKES (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

501	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
502	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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515	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11

4.45 TRAIL HANDICAP (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

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Nottingham

2.50 City of Nottingham

1	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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10	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11

Newcastle

2.25 NATIONAL FUR SERVICES ROSEBERY MAIDEN STAKES (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

1	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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Warwick

2.35 B.L.C. MAIDEN STAKES (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

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Fairyhouse

3.55 JAMESON IRISH GRAND NATIONAL (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

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4.55 WESTMINSTER TAXI INSURANCE ROSEBERY HANDICAP (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

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2	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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Nottingham

2.50 City of Nottingham

1	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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Newcastle

2.25 NATIONAL FUR SERVICES ROSEBERY MAIDEN STAKES (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

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Warwick

2.35 B.L.C. MAIDEN STAKES (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

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2	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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4	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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9	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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Fairyhouse

3.55 JAMESON IRISH GRAND NATIONAL (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

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2	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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4	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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6	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
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10	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11

Chan 4

4.55 WESTMINSTER TAXI INSURANCE ROSEBERY HANDICAP (5) 7YO 1m 2f 12.142

1	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
2	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
3	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
4	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
5	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
6	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
7	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
8	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
9	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11
10	0- BERRY (17) W (17) C (Hill 9-0)	J Doyle 11

Nottingham

2.50 City

UNITED KEEP TITLE FIRMLY IN SIGHT • NEWCASTLE EYE RENEWED CHANCE • LIVERPOOL SEE RED

Premiership: Manchester City 2, Manchester United 3

Cantona's pain is United's gain



Touch too much... Eric Cantona flicks the ball past the lunging Nigel Clough at Maine Road

Commentary David Lacey

Should Manchester United regain the Premiership title this season it is to be hoped, though not with much anticipation, that amid the mutual congratulations someone will remember to fax a message of thanks to the FA disciplinary committee.

over Manchester City at Maine Road could not have happened without those eight months of enforced idleness. Remembering the expressions of barely repressed fury on the faces of the United management after the FA had extended the club's own ban on Cantona beyond the end of last season it is unlikely that this will be recognised now.

challenge and Schmeichel's dive. In that instant City looked capable of overcoming United for the first time in seven seasons, but within six minutes they were heading for another defeat.

Coventry City 1 Liverpool 0 Evans in protest at Salako tackle

Martin Thorpe sees time cruelly running out for Liverpool

HAVING met with triumph last Wednesday, Liverpool found it impossible to treat disaster just the same on Saturday. At the final whistle Roy Evans and his coaches surrounded the referee and treated him to a prolonged verbal tirade as he escaped down the tunnel.

Newcastle United 2, Queens Park Rangers 1

Crowd dictate the way to Keegan's late balancing act

Cynthia Bateman

NEWCASTLE go to Ewood Park tonight with Kevin Keegan convinced that his side can stop Manchester United taking the title.

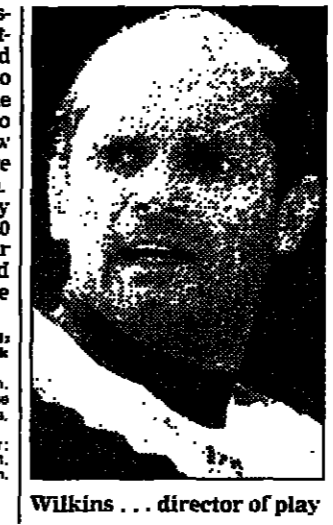
day. The final chapter is only just being written. Newcastle may find mid-table, lacklustre Blackburn an easier proposition than QPR, whose sterling efforts nevertheless left them second from bottom.

play which saw him almost always at the centre of things. On one occasion he was signalling other defenders into crucial positions, while heading away a clearance as though on auto-reject.

son, who is red-hot with red cards. This time a yellow sufficed. QPR simply got on with things, counter-attacked and in the 53rd minute went ahead when Impey's cross was deflected by Betty into the path of Holloway, whose volley took Hislop and almost everyone else by surprise.

making changes in games" — made a substitution. "I've always said the fans run this club," he joked afterwards. "If they chant for Keith Gillespie, you have to put him on."

Five minutes later Beardsley had won the match, beating two defenders and squirming through a gap to crack a superb shot into the far corner. He left the pitch to a standing ovation.



Wilkins... director of play

Advertisement for 'Think you could do better?' featuring a football management game. The ad includes the text 'Prove it.' and 'The award winning football management game'.

Southampton 1, Blackburn Rovers 0

Le Tissier's spot of pleasure offers Saints route to salvation

WHAT a difference a few moments can make at this time of the season. With less than 15 minutes to go Southampton looked destined for next-to-bottom place in the table. Then it all went wrong for QPR at Newcastle and it all came right for Matthew Le Tissier at The Dell.

stuck by him." But he owed as much to his makeshift back four of Neilson, Dodd, Widdington and Bennell, who limited Shearer and Newell to a couple of half-chances.

Everton 3, Bolton Wanderers 0

Bolton turn up their toes

ONLY last season the great cavaliers of Bolton Wanderers were feted as footballing visionaries. It was a flippant one-liner yet through the dead wood of the First Division. Those were the days — a lovely team playing lovely stuff.

trip to Goodison Park. They had to win but victories are achieved at such venues only by players of character, whose will to succeed is not shattered by the first painful rap across the shins.

"As a team we never really threatened," said the manager Colin Todd, proving again that he has now mastered the art of understatement. If Everton encounter such inadequate resistance in their remaining fixtures, they may yet qualify for Europe next season.

Wynalda shows way for San Jose

ERIC WYNALDA scored the first ever goal in the 10-team US Major League on Saturday, earning San Jose Clash a 1-0 win over Washington DC United.

"It meant more to me than any goal I've ever scored," said a tearful Wynalda afterwards.

First Division: Ipswich Town 1, Reading 2

Reading make the most of Portman Road's surface tension

ASUFFOLK punch would fall on Portman Road's pitch these days. In the late Eighties a farmer, offering snow-clearance aid, took the top off. The surface has gone down ever since while Ipswich have gone up and down.

ago Reading came within five minutes at Wembley of beating Bolton to the Premiership. They are no worse now, despite a place only one above relegation.

Home Accident Surveillance System, conducted through 18 hospitals. Sheppard might have been one of the five who needed treatment for accidents with a sleeve. He hooked, sliced, shanked, fell over — and still Reading passed back.

Why is over talking Yab

Montgomer in check

صبراً من الامل

Golf

Montgomery held in check by putter

David Davies in Atlanta

ONE good, final round equalled a very good, not to say substantial cheque in the BellSouth Classic in Atlanta, Georgia, yesterday. With a first prize of \$158,000 on offer, anyone in the top 10 would earn \$20,000 or more and Colin Montgomerie and Ian Woosnam were both well aware of that.

Starting at one under par, nine behind the overnight leader David Duval, they knew that in the order of 88 on the difficult but beautiful Atlanta Country Club course would bring considerable reward, and it was Montgomerie who made the first move. He holed a 30-foot putt on the 1st green, the kind of encouragement that often leads to a good putting round. This did not transpire, however, largely because the Scot could not get his normally immaculate iron game in order and kept leaving himself 40-foot "birdie" putts, which, in reality, he was glad just to get close. Two of these, at the 5th and 6th, actually hit the hole but stayed out.

contrast to the way Corvy Pavin, in the match in front, played it. A weak drive left him an impossible second, which hit a tree. He punched the ball to the green and holed a 20-foot putt. A four went on the card both times. Like Montgomerie, Woosnam had problems on the greens. His first birdie came at the 4th where, from 30 feet, he holed a 20-foot putt. A four went on the card both times. Like Montgomerie, Woosnam had problems on the greens. His first birdie came at the 4th where, from 30 feet, he holed a 20-foot putt. A four went on the card both times.

Last year's tournament was enlivened by the presence at the top of the leader-board after three rounds of Stephen Keppeler, an Englishman and former Walker Cup player who is now a local club professional. Keppeler went on to finish third, to win \$80,000 and to remark that he had won the equivalent of 3,000 hours' work giving lessons to his members. Keppeler won the British Boys' championship at Seaton Carew in 1978, played in the 1983 Walker Cup at Hoylake and then took a golf scholarship at Florida State University. His success in 1995 did not seem him an automatic place in this year's event, nor could he get himself an invitation - ironically because so many European players were after the same thing with this week's US Masters in mind. So Keppeler joined a field of more than 100 qualifiers competing for two places. He came first.

His preparation has been rather different from that of the Europeans with whom he has been mixing this week. He does his day's work, puts his daughter to bed and then goes down to a nearby driving range for some practice. After that he returns home, switches on the video and watches and re-runs the tape of last year's event. So far, sadly, it has not worked although he qualified for the final two rounds with a 71 and a 76, but his third round of 72, his 33 strokes behind Duval.

"I'm beginning to realise," he said afterwards, "just how special last year was. I don't think it really hit me until I came out here this year and tried to do it again. I went out in 39 yesterday, taking a seven at the 9th.



Wheeler important... Jehan d'Orgeux raises the obligatory handlebars as his 750cc machine crosses the finishing line in the Le Mans 24-hour motorcycle race. The Belgian shares his victory with Scotland's Brian Morrison and Piergiorgio Bontempi of Italy, his colleagues in Team France Kawasaki. Morrison, 35, completed his third victory in this prestigious endurance event, riding another Kawasaki in 1993 and a Honda last year. Michael Doohan of Australia, the world champion, won yesterday's Indonesian Grand Prix, regaining top form after finishing only fifth in the season's opening race at Shah Alam the previous weekend.

Snooker

Bond must mature for a £60,000 dividend

Clive Everton in Plymouth

NIGEL BOND, the world No. 12, has shown a maturity that will make his fourth semi-final today after beating Dave Harold 6-5 here in the British Open semi-finals. No more than a single frame separated the players through a long, grinding match. There were some substantial frame-clinching breaks - 84 by Harold to lead

2-1, 62 by Bond to lead 4-3 and 62 by Harold to lead 5-4 - but also several glaring mistakes in those frames and much mediocrity all round. "I wanted so badly to get to the final," said Bond, now assured of at least £32,000. "We both did. That's probably why it wasn't a very good match."

Against John Higgins or Ronnie O'Sullivan, the other semi-finalists, Bond knows he will need to play less like this and more as he did when he disposed of Stephen Hendry

Weekend results

Soccer

FA COUNCIL PRESIDENTS

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for various football matches.

FA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for National Conference matches.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Premier League matches.

CHAMPIONSHIP

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Championship matches.

LEAGUE ONE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for League One matches.

LEAGUE TWO

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for League Two matches.

IRISH LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Irish League matches.

SCOTTISH CUP

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Scottish Cup matches.

SCOTTISH LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Scottish League matches.

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Scottish Premier League matches.

SCOTTISH SECOND LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Scottish Second League matches.

SCOTTISH THIRD LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Scottish Third League matches.

SCOTTISH FOURTH LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Scottish Fourth League matches.

ITALIAN LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Italian League matches.

ENGLISH LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for English League matches.

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for English Premier League matches.

ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for English Championship matches.

ENGLISH LEAGUE ONE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for English League One matches.

ENGLISH LEAGUE TWO

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for English League Two matches.

ENGLISH LEAGUE THREE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for English League Three matches.

REGISTRY UNION

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Registry Union matches.

BASEBALL

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for baseball matches.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for National League matches.

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for American League matches.

BASKETBALL

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for basketball matches.

RUSSIAN LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian League matches.

RUSSIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian Premier League matches.

TENNIS

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for tennis matches.

BASEBALL

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for baseball matches.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for National League matches.

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for American League matches.

BASKETBALL

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for basketball matches.

RUSSIAN LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian League matches.

RUSSIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian Premier League matches.

SOCCER

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for soccer matches.

RUSSIAN LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian League matches.

RUSSIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian Premier League matches.

RUSSIAN SECOND LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian Second League matches.

RUSSIAN THIRD LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian Third League matches.

RUSSIAN FOURTH LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian Fourth League matches.

RUSSIAN FIFTH LEAGUE

Table with 2 columns: Team, Goals. Lists results for Russian Fifth League matches.

Sport in brief

Washington defied in Davis Cup defeat

PETR KORDA, sharply criticised for a poor performance on Friday, became the hero yesterday as the Czech Republic knocked out the United States, the Davis Cup holders, in the World Group quarter-finals. He recovered from his shaky display in Friday's opening singles against Todd Martin to take the deciding match from MaliV Washington 7-6, 6-3, 6-2. Korda, injured for most of last year, staved off two set points, broke Washington's serve in the first point of the tie-break and never looked back. "He played as solid as a rock," said the Czech, "but as the match went on I began to feel better and better."

Makinen trophy on first Safari

TOMMI MAKINEN confounded expectations and overturned conventions in winning the Safari Rally. The Finn survived a tyre blow-out and a flash flood to sprout away from Kenneth Eriksson yesterday. Makinen had not been expected to win on his first attempt at the world championship's roughest and fastest rally, especially as his vehicle was not meant to be up to the task. Mitsubishi brought a car designed for much shorter spruicables but survived by replacing fragile parts with stronger ones.

Cullen puts Hightown in final

TINA CULLEN scored yet another European Cup Winners' Cup goal yesterday to give Hightown the draw they needed to gain a place in today's final against Berliner, writes Paul Rowley. Cullen scored four in the 12-0 drubbing of Libertas Sabas on Saturday, then gave Hightown an early lead against Rotterdam yesterday with a sweet drive from their second penalty corner. She has scored 10 goals in seven games in this competition. Guildford, also needing a draw from their final group match at the Hague after Danny Hall scored two fine goals in a 3-0 win over Bohemians Prague, did not know if they would be in trouble against Duxheim of Germany, but lost 2-0. A couple of defensive errors allowed Matthias Beckmann and Uwe Krause to score in the 49th and 67th minutes.

Bartoli takes Flanders

MICHELE BARTOLI scored his first World Cup victory when he finished almost a minute ahead of the pack in yesterday's Tour of Flanders. The Italian broke free of the leading group 10 miles from the finish on the Wall of Geraardsbergen, a punishing cobblestone climb, to complete the 167-mile race in 4hr 31min 28sec. The World Cup holder, Belgium's Johan Museeuw, was beaten into third place by Fabio Baldato after an 18-man sprint for second.

Jets crash to end season

THE CHESTER JETS stalled 12 minutes from the end of the Budweiser League season yesterday. After taking a 65-47 lead in the third quarter against the Thames Valley Tigers, they failed to score another field goal in going down 70-67 in what may be their last game in the league. Chester will have to seek re-election for the fifth successive season, along with the Doncaster Panthers and the Hemel Royals. Supporting clubs are: Doncaster Panthers, Hemel Royals, Worthing, Birmingham, Derby, Leopards & Manchester.

Why is everyone talking Yakult? Advertisement for Yakult probiotic drink.

SUNDAY BBC Radio 4 COMPLAINT FROM SPECTRUM RADIO Advertisement for Spectrum Radio.

SportsGuardian

ARGENTINIAN GRAND PRIX GIVES THE WILLIAMS DRIVER HIS FOURTH WIN IN A ROW

Dream season rolls on for Hill

Richard Williams in Buenos Aires

DAMON HILL may have the best car in the field but it still needs to be driven properly. A commanding victory in an incident-packed Grand Prix of Argentina yesterday, his fourth championship win in a row, confirmed his increasing maturity, while second place for his team-mate Jacques Villeneuve provided the Williams-Renault team with their 26th perfect one-two finish.

Hill's success, his 16th in grands prix, brings him level with Stirling Moss's career total. He now enjoys a perfect score of 30 points out of 30, an 18-point lead over Villeneuve as the grand prix circus prepares to move back to Europe. Perhaps more significantly, he now has 26 points more than Michael Schumacher, who retired his Ferrari soon after half-distance with handling problems after part of his rear wing broke off.

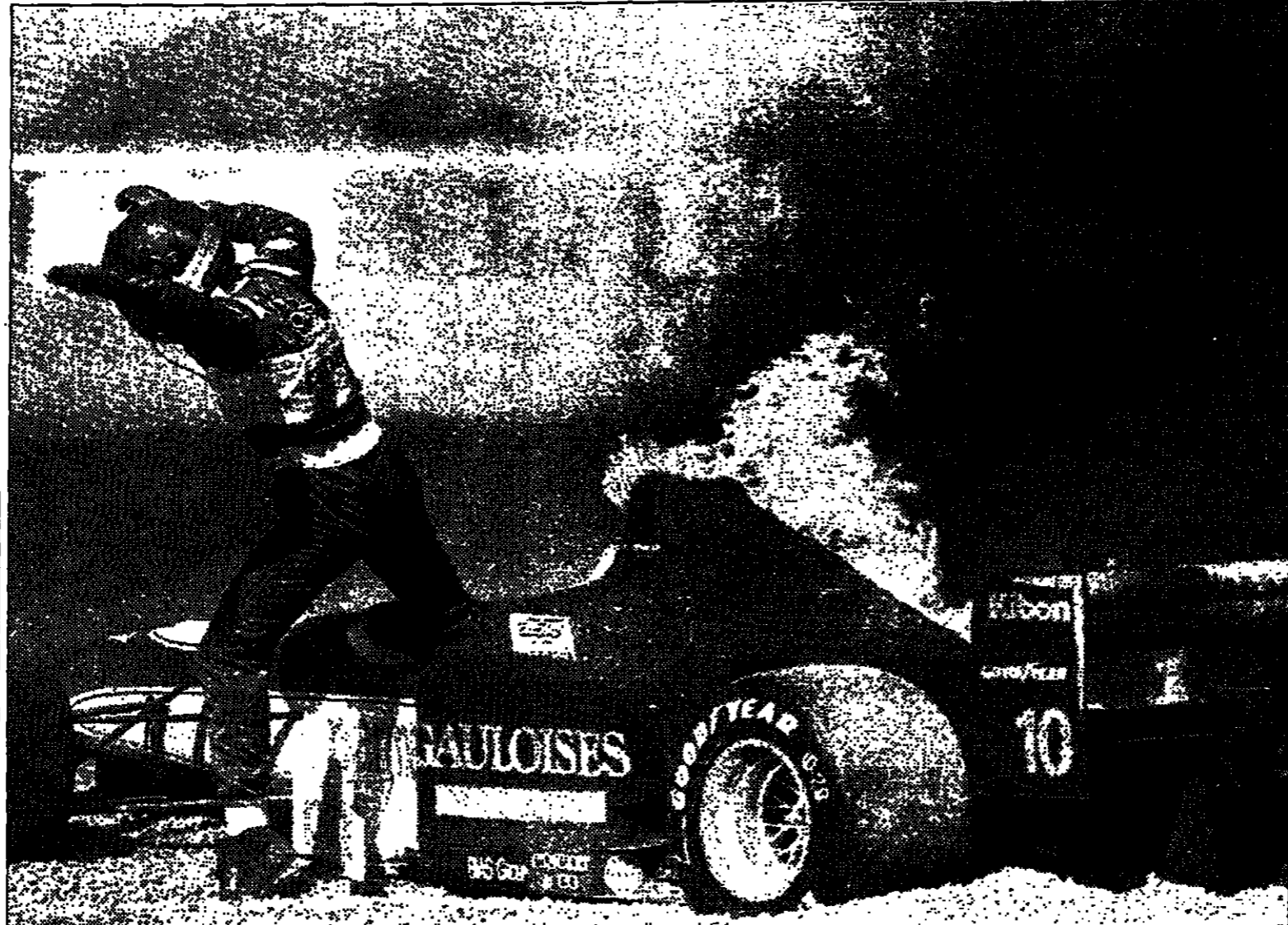
Third in the race, despite stalling his engine during a pit stop, was Jean Alesi in his Renault-engined Benetton, ahead of Rubens Barrichello's Jordan-Peugeot, Eddie Irvine's Ferrari and Jos Verstappen's Footwork-Hart. In hot and dusty conditions only 10 cars finished the race, including David Coulthard and Johnny Herbert, who will not

have been delighted by seventh and ninth positions respectively.

Hill led from flag to flag over 72 laps of the tight, bumpy 2.5-mile Autodromo Oscar Galvez, fending off an early challenge from Schumacher and retaining the lead through a series of incidents that enlivened the middle of the race and brought out the safety car for a lengthy period.

While the Williams team leader made a perfect start, holding Schumacher at bay as they contested the first bend, his number two fared less well. His clutch slipping as he tried to leave the line, Villeneuve saw the two Benetons of Alesi and Gerhard Berger roar past in the first 100 metres. By the time the field had sorted itself out through Turn One he was ninth and beginning the long haul back towards the leaders.

Although the margin between them was less than a second for the first half-dozen laps, Schumacher showed no sign that the Ferrari was capable of challenging Hill for the lead. Behind the Benetons in third and fourth, Coulthard was holding up a pursuing gang including Barrichello, Verstappen and Mika Hakkinen in the other McLaren. Villeneuve's brisk progress through the field became the main focus of interest in the early stages, climaxed by a powerful rush



Leap for your life... the Brazilian driver Pedro Diniz scrambles clear moments before his Ligier was engulfed in flames. PHOTOGRAPH: BEN RADFORD

down the inside of Coulthard to claim fifth place on the ninth lap.

With Hill extending his lead to six seconds, Schumacher broke the stalemate by taking on fuel and tyres on lap 21 in a stop lasting only seven seconds. When Alesi came out of the pits a lap later, the world champion had the big crowd cheering as he squeezed the Ferrari past the Benetton into the first turn.

Between the 23rd and 25th laps both Williams made their first pit stops and had resumed their positions when

the race suddenly came alive. On the 27th lap Luca Badoer turned his Forti-Ford over on the inside of the turn behind the paddock and could be seen crawling out of the inverted car. The Forti did not seem to be in a particularly dangerous position but the race director sent out the safety car to sit in front of the leader, allowing the field to bunch up and costing Hill the margin he had so assiduously built up. Now Schumacher, Alesi and Berger were back in his mirrors.

The field was circulating

gently three laps later when the Minardi-Ford of Pedro Diniz, which had just left the pits, burst into flame around the back of the circuit, perhaps as a result of a fuel leak. Its rear wheels locked, the Minardi spun to a halt and the Brazilian emerged from a ball of orange flame miraculously unscathed.

The pace car left the track at the start of the 33rd lap, at which point Heinz-Harald Frentzen spun his Sauber out of the race. Again Hill held a narrow lead for several laps, and at the end of the 40th Schumacher dived back into his pit, leaving with fuel and new tyres after 12.5 seconds, back in eighth place. Alesi's aggression was again in evidence as, emerging from his second stop after having to restart his engine, he passed Schumacher at Turn One.

When Barrichello and Herbert followed the French driver past the Ferrari, it became evident that Schumacher was in trouble. At the end of the 45th lap he headed for the pit lane and drove straight into his garage, shortly to be seen in animated conversation with his race engineer Ignazio Lunetta. Later it emerged that a piece of debris had struck his rear wing, removing part of it and

creating a pronounced instability. A team spokesman said that the wing would have taken too long to replace to make the effort worthwhile.

Schumacher was reported to have said that the debris had come from Hill's car, although the Williams driver was unable to confirm it. "I couldn't have seen anything," he said. "You can hardly see the car behind you, never mind anything else." He added that the new shape of the cockpit surroundings, dictated by safety regulations, makes the wing mirrors much less effective.

Hill, too, suffered from handicaps, in his case an upset stomach and the loss of radio communication with

his engineers, which meant that all signals had to be transmitted via the old-fashioned pit board. But the rest of the race, including a second pit stop, went smoothly enough to give him a comfortable 12-second cushion over Villeneuve by the time the race ended after almost two hours.

After Schumacher's disappearance and Alesi's difficulties in the pits Berger looked a certainty for second place between Hill and Villeneuve, for whom the arrival of the safety car had proved a blessing. But after his second stop, with 15 laps to go, the Austrian abandoned his car against the barrier. Thereafter Verstappen's successful pursuit of Coulthard provided the race's chief remaining interest, although Alesi had cut the gap to Villeneuve from 12 seconds to 2.5 by the end, the Benetton running out of fuel on the slowing-down lap.

"It's a great result and a fantastic day," Hill said. "I can't get any better than this. It was a bit disappointing when the pace car came out and allowed the cars to close up but it was the same for everyone. The competition's getting closer all the time and there will be some fantastic races to come."

Scottish Cup semi-final

Celtic 1, Rangers 2

Rangers maintain firm grip

Patrick Glenn

CELTIC's elimination from the cup presented evidence that their inability to beat Rangers, who play Hearts in the final, stems not from a hex but an affliction.

This latest defeat in the sixth meeting between the sides since September — Rangers have now won three and drawn the others — was as comprehensive as any which preceded it.

Even if Van Hooydonk's goal eight minutes from the end gave Celtic fans a glimpse of a replay and caused their counterparts to whistle for the finish, there was a lack of punch about the Parkhead side that made them easy victims.

Celtic seem to lose strength, pace and imagination whenever they meet their greatest rivals. Even if Rangers' concession of two-thirds of the field in Old Firm games is a calculated tactic, their opponents seem unable or unwilling to operate at their normal speed.

Once again they appeared to meander through a pedestrian first half before conceding a goal in the 43rd minute.

It resulted from an appalling piece of judgment by Marshall. Robertson's shot appeared to be sliding wide when Marshall dived full length to push it straight to McColl, who drilled home from 10 yards.

By the time Laudrup finished off a lightning one-two with Durie by lobbing Marshall from outside the area, Rangers were by far the more effective and dangerous team. Van Hooydonk's glancing header from McNamara's cross gave the scoreline an inappropriate look, although two minutes from time Donnelly missed a chance to force a replay.

On Wednesday at Truncastle in the Premier Division Rangers meet Hearts, who beat Aberdeen 2-1 in the other semi-final on Saturday, in a final rehearsal.

That game is no less important for Rangers, who are trying to protect a five-point lead over Celtic.

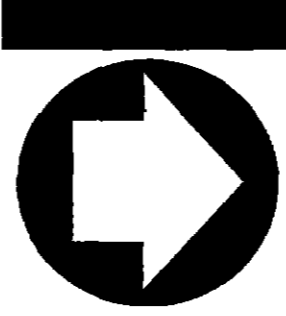
Celtic: Marshall, McNamara, Hughes, Boyd, McKinlay, Donnelly, Grant, McEneaney, McLoughlin (Wighornet, n-i), Van Hooydonk, Thom.
Rangers: Goram, Glenn, Patrick, McLaran, Brown, Robertson, Durie (Sloan, Smith), Gascoigne, McCall, McColl, Laudrup.
Referee: L. Mottram (Forth).

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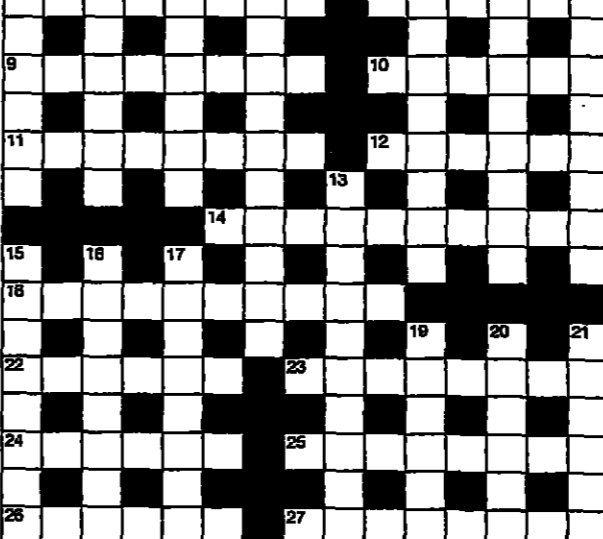


If what it takes to get ahead and survive ahead in TV is toughness, Gaby undoubtedly has it. "She's hard as nails, ladies and gentlemen!" shouts Chris Evans. Dan Glaister talks to Gaby Roslin

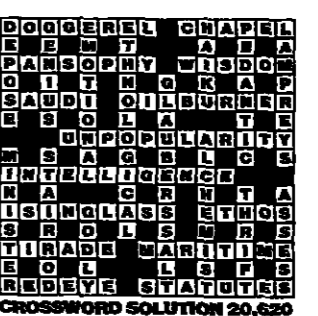
C2 page 8

Guardian Crossword No 20,621

Set by Crispa



- Across**
- 1 Dispatch in which military men scoffed about support (6)
 - 5 Refuses to admit bread's not well made (6)
 - 9 A bitter harangue to help backward folk (8)
 - 10 Paper that's to come out after the end of August (6)
 - 11 Left at home to occupy a relative (8)
 - 12 Meals the queen finds something of a problem (6)
 - 14 Not the government's workplace (10)
 - 18 Mundane labours for the defence (10)
 - 22 A steep requirement for converting foreign currency (6)
 - 23 An example of the generally accepted viewpoint (6)
 - 24 A moving experience (6)
 - 25 Obstruct it and a person will give voice (6)
- Down**
- 26 About to go into action, so double up (6)
 - 27 A fan might well be there, and going wild (6)
 - 1 Salad-stuff some undergrad is having for lunch (6)
 - 2 Discovers a certain number wins (6)
 - 3 Rig has possibilities, but it's too flamboyant (6)
 - 4 The board readily accepts small change, and that serves (10)
 - 6 A cause of ill-feeling all round (6)
 - 7 Criminal firmwits inside (6)
 - 8 A listening device put in to influence the strong language (6)
 - 13 Deceived the worker and so assumed control (4,2,4)
 - 15 Deposit perhaps a hundred, which can be really hard (6)



- Crossword Solution 20,620**
- WINNERS OF PRIZE PUZZLE 20,614**
This week's winners of a Collins English Dictionary are: 10000 10000 of 10000, 10000 10000 of 10000, 10000 10000 of 10000, 10000 10000 of 10000.
- 16 Get into line — time for beastly training! (8)
 - 17 A mad character in the Civil Service giving talks (8)
 - 19 All out attack (6)
 - 20 Points to the centre yet again (6)
 - 21 Shudder at reading of French trial (6)
- Solution tomorrow**
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